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Lighthouse
Nan

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When the Circus Came to Town, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs. (25c)	5 3

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago

LIGHTHOUSE NAN

A COMEDY DRAMA
IN THREE ACTS

BY

SHELDON PARMER

AUTHOR OF

"An Arizona Cowboy," "Safety First," etc.



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3 2 2

CHICAGO
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

LIGHTHOUSE NAN

PERSONS IN THE PLAY.

HON. JOHN ENLOW...*President of the Seacoast Banking Co.*
NED BLAKE.....*His Private Secretary*
ICHABOD BUZZER.....*The Old Keeper of the Lighthouse*
SIR ARTHUR CHOKE.....*A British Aristocrat*
INJUN JIM.....*A Bad Man*
NAN*A Little Roustabout*
MOLL BUZZER.....*The Gentle Antelope*
HON. SARAH CHUMLEY-CHOKE.....*Arthur's Sister*
HORTENSE ENLOW.....*A City Belle*
Fishermen.

ACT I—The exterior of a rough lighthouse on the Carolina coast. Nan begins her education.

ACT II—Same scene. Ten days later. Nan continues her education.

ACT III—Library in John Enlow's city home. Two years later. Nan completes her education.

TIME—*Present Day.*



TIME OF PLAYING—*Two Hours and Fifteen Minutes.*

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STORY OF THE PLAY.

This powerful, absorbing play is presented to amateurs for the first time with the assurance that it will continue to please audiences for many years to come as it has done in the past. It was originally presented by the Van Dyke-Eaton Stock Company and has always proved a financial success. The audience is made to feel that they have actually known and lived among the characters, smiling at their joys, sympathizing with their sorrows and rejoicing in the happy ending.

While the story is not a novelty, each act teems with bright dialogue and quick action, the situations are natural and work themselves to a happy ending in a logical, concise manner. It is a melodramatic story of refinement, and while the situations are strong they are not lurid, and the comedy is clean-cut and human.

The play opens in a rough lighthouse on the Carolina coast. Ned Blake, from the city, is spending his vacation here and has been captivated with the cheerfulness and artless simplicity of a young girl, Nan, supposed to be the granddaughter of Ichabod Buzzer, the old lighthouse keeper. Nan has grown up in her rough surroundings as a wild flower, beautiful and innocent, with no knowledge of the great world that lies over the mountains. Ned Blake has taught her to read and succeeds in winning her girlish heart. A party of Ned's friends come to visit him and spend several days at the lighthouse. In the party is Mr. John Enlow, whose baby girl had been abducted many years before by Injun Jim, the son-in-law of Ichabod Buzzer. Jim's wife, Liza Buzzer, returns the baby to Enlow after Jim has been sent to the penitentiary, but instead of returning the rightful heiress, she substitutes her own child and Lighthouse Nan proves to be John Enlow's daughter.

Injun Jim meets Hortense Enlow, who is really his own daughter, and tells her the secret of her birth. She bribes him to obtain the proofs of his story from old Moll Buzzer, Ichabod's wife. He attempts to steal these papers at night but is frustrated by Nan, who rings the alarm

bell and awakens the village. John Enlow has taken a fancy to Nan, not knowing that she is his real daughter, and offers to send her away for two years to boarding-school. The last act reveals the library in Enlow's city home. It is Christmas Day and Nan is coming home for a vacation. Ned Blake, still in love with Nan, has become suspicious of Hortense, who shows an unexplainable interest in Indian Jim, her real father, who has been sent to the penitentiary. Ned, suspecting the truth, sends for Ichabod and Moll Buzzer in an effort to clear up the mystery of Nan's birth.

In the meantime Hortense has secretly wedded an English baronet, and when the truth is known that she is really the child of Injun Jim and Liza Buzzer, John Enlow kindly conceals this fact from her husband and they depart to begin life anew in the old world. Enlow tells the world that Nan is his adopted daughter and heiress and the play ends happily with a chime of Christmas bells and "peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Comedy scenes are interwoven with the dramatic story. the bibulous old Cap'n Ichabod Buzzer, his tyrannical wife, the English baronet, the mule January (who doesn't appear) and the antics of Nan herself furnish the audience with many a laugh.

SYNOPSIS FOR THE PROGRAM.

ACT I—Outside a Carolina lighthouse, 'long about sundown. The gentle antelope and the keeper of the lighthouse. Injun Jim starts trouble. "Mrs. Buzzer, you got the bottle, allow me to present you with the cork." Nan and Ned overcome Injun Jim. "I'm an Injun, and an Injun never forgets a wrong!" Nan learns to read. The locket. "That's the face I always dream about. Oh, Mr. Blake, do you reckon she is my sure-enough mother?" Ned saves Nan from Moll. The visitors from the city. Sir Arthur, the speculator. "I never seen a real live speckled-tater afore." Nan goes hunting for a mollie cottontail and catches

an Injun. "Stand right whar you are, or I'll blow you clean into Kingdom Come!"

ACT II—Same scene, ten days later. Cap'n Buzzer and his mule January. "That 'ere mule gits more'n' more like my wife every day he lives." The picnic to see the sunset. Nan bapsouses a biddy hen to keep her from setting. England vs. America. "We've fed old England, we gave her a warm breakfast in 1776, and a boilin' dinner in 1812." Nan poses as a lady, with disastrous results. Ned finds his wild rose. "You talk jest like the Bible." An awful load for old January. Injun Jim's secret. "I am your father!" The disgrace of Hortense. Ichabod goes to town. "She might take it in her gentle head to lock me out, and I'm gittin' too old to sleep with January!" Mr. Enlow decides to give Nan a chance and send her to school. Injun Jim and Nan. The ringing of the bell. "Hands up, Injun Jim!"

ACT III—Two years later. Mr. Enlow's library on Christmas night. Ned begins to suspect Hortense. "I'll have the truth at last if it takes every dollar I'm worth." Hortense objects to Nan. "Either she leaves this house tomorrow, or I leave it!" Nan comes home from boarding school. The mysterious baby. Nan and Ned disagree and then make it all up. Ichabod and Moll visit the city. The Cap'n sits on the couch. "Holy mackerel, I thought I set on a cat." Hortense bribes Moll. Sarah flirts with Ned but is disappointed. A pressing engagement in the conservatory. Nan and the Cap'n. "January's got the heaves, old Sukey's got a calf, the old red hen's got ten little chicks and the blacksmith's wife's got twins. Population is shore a-growin'!" Hortense tries to destroy the papers. The generosity of John Enlow. All is right at last; with the ringing of Christmas chimes comes peace on earth, good-will to men!

COSTUMES.

MR. ENLOW—Gray hair and mustache. Eyeglasses. Yachting suit in Acts I and II. Full evening dress in Act III.

NED—Juvenile make-up. Hunting suit in Act I. Yachting suit in Act II. Evening dress in Act III. Aged about 24.

ICHABOD—White wig, beard and eyebrows. Red cheeks and nose. Old clothes and hat in Acts I and II. Tarpaulin, if possible. Boots. Store clothes for Act III. Clothes too small. Aged about 68.

SIR ARTHUR—Juvenile make-up. Yachting suit in Acts I and II. Monocle. Full evening dress in Act III. Overcoat and top-hat for last entrance.

INJUN JIM—Aged 40. A dark-skinned burly tramp. Ragged clothes and hat. Straight black hair, but no other indication of Indian blood.

NAN—Long yellow curls. Short ragged dress in Acts I and II. Torn stockings and very ragged shoes. Old torn hat. Act III: Pink ball gown with train. Hair up.

MOLL—Aged 66. Long ragged dress and dirty apron. Small shawl over head. Walk with stick. White hair, straggling from under shawl. Act III: Dark old-fashioned dress and cane. Hair somewhat neater.

SARAH—Yachting dresses for Acts I and II. White hat with veil. Act III: Evening gown of black and white. Opera cloak for last entrance.

HORTENSE—Dark hair. Costumes similar to Sarah's, but of contrasting color.

PROPERTIES.

Fence.

Two natural trees.

Clothes line with clothes on it.

Set house and porch.

Large iron bell mounted on pole.

Rope for bell with noose in end.

Two benches.

Old chair.

Barrel.

Natural vines and paper flowers.

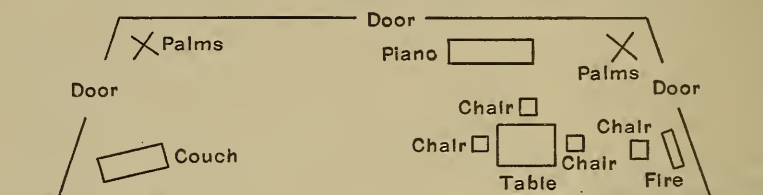
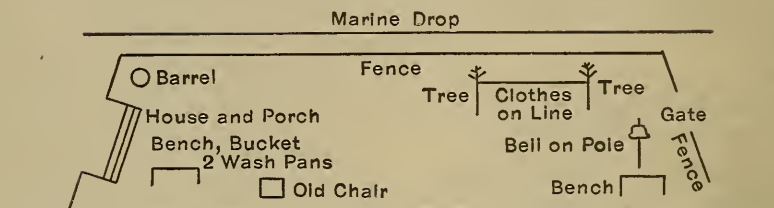
Autumn leaves.

Whisky bottle for ICHABOD.

Locket on chain for INJUN.
Revolver for INJUN.
Book for NAN.
Stick for MOLL.
Rifle for SIR ARTHUR.
Lorgnette for HORTENSE.
Parasol for SARAH.
Clothes-basket for NAN.
Wagon.
Whip.
Live hen for NAN.
Old door knob for NAN.
Long shawl for HORTENSE.
Coins for MR. ENLOW.
Ropes and old bandana for INJUN.
Knife for INJUN.
Portieres.
Palms.
Leather couch.
Chandelier.
Lighted candles.
Christmas greens.
Large table, fancy.
Fireplace, with fire, fender, etc.
Piano.
Fancy chairs.
Two cigars.
Bag for MOLL.
Decanter and glasses on table.
Eyeglass for SIR ARTHUR.
Coin for NAN.
Chimes back of scenes.

SCENE PLOT.

ACTS I AND II.



ACT III.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *R. D.*, right door; *L. D.*, left door, etc.; 1 *E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance up stage, etc.; *D. F.*, door in flat or scene running across the back of the stage; up stage, away from footlights, down stage, near footlights; 1 *G.*, first groove, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

LIGHTHOUSE NAN

ACT I.

SCENE: *The exterior of a rough lighthouse on the Carolina coast. The time is the late afternoon in the latter part of October.*

The back drop may be any ordinary exterior, but a marine drop on a rocky coast should be used if possible. A dilapidated old rail fence runs across the back of the stage about two feet in front of the rear scene. This fence also runs down the left of the stage, from the rear to the front, and has a rude gate at L. about halfway between back drop and footlights. A set house with porch appears down R. This house is not absolutely necessary, but a rude porch should be simulated from scantlings painted dark brown. Two steps lead to the porch. The fence and porch are covered with natural vines to which are attached a few scarlet trumpet-flowers made of tissue paper. Two natural trees, with autumnal foliage, are nailed to the stage, one at rear C. and one in the fence corner up L. Barrel up R. An old bench with a rude bucket and two battered washpans stand near the porch. An old chair is down R.

A large bell, mounted on a pole about eight feet high, stands down L. From this bell hangs a rope with a noose in the end large enough to admit NAN'S head. This rope hangs down about three or four feet. The bell may be borrowed from a hardware store and should be of the ordinary iron, church or school variety. A rough bench faces the audience, under the bell. Autumn leaves cover the stage. A few flowers, suitable to the season, appear along the fence, their pots hidden by leaves. If desired, an old well may be up R., but this is not essential. Attach boughs of trees to the side scenes so that they overhang the stage, giving the appearance of autumn trees around

the house. A general state of dilapidation prevails. A clothes-line, on which are displayed several red flannel and other incongruous garments, runs across stage at rear, from tree to tree.

Light one-quarter down at rise of curtain. When curtain rises bird-notes are heard back of scene. After a pause, MOLL BUZZER enters from the house.

MOLL BUZZER. Nan! (*Loud wail.*) Nan! I wonder where on airth that gal has got to. Me here at the light-house doin' all the work and her a gaddin' out in that sail boat with Ned Blake. If Ichabod Buzzer was any sort of a man at all, he'd soon put a stop to sech carryings on. But he ain't worth shucks, and he never was worth shucks, and he never will be worth shucks, and I was a fool ever to have married such a low-down, pesky, no-count piece of humanity as him. Me as could 'a had my pick of all the shore men from Kitty Hawk to Hatteras—and then to take *him*! Buzzer! Buzzer, where are you?

ICHABOD BUZZER (*in house*). Here I am, my darling! In the house.

MOLL. Well, you march out here, or I'll march in. You understand?

ICHABOD BUZZER *appears on porch.*

ICHABOD. Did you call me, Molly?

MOLL. Call you? I nearly yelled by head off'n my shoulders. (*Grabs him.*)

ICHABOD. Now, don't be rough, Mrs. Buzzer; don't be rough.

MOLL. You hike down there to the wharf and if you get a sight of Nan tell her to come up here right away, er I'll come down there and give her the worst hidin' she's had fer a coon's age. Understand?

ICHABOD. But I was just going to clean the light.

MOLL (*jerks him over the gate at L.*). I'll clean the lights. (*Gives him a shove.*) Now be off. It's purt' near

supper time. (*Crosses to porch.*) If you're gone more'n a quarter of an hour, I'll come down and get you. Understand! (*Goes into house, slamming door.*)

ICHABOD. Yes, my honeysuckle, I understand. That's right, Mrs. Buzzer, you go gally gallyvantin' down the flowery paths of life and leave your poor lawful wedded husband to toil and moil and work by the sweat of his brow to earn silks and satins fer you to gally gallyvant around in. It ain't right, decidedly and finally, it ain't right! (*Takes out whisky bottle from hip-pocket.*) I wonder if she missed the medicine bottle. (*Drinks.*) I was jest in the act of taking a little medicine from the bottle when she called me and I got so excited that I took the whole durn bottle. Well, Mrs. Moll Buzzer, wife of my bosom, here's yer very good health and many of 'em. (*Drinks.*)

Enter INJUN JIM through the gate at L.

INJUN JIM (*stealthily crosses to ICHABOD and hits him on the back just as he has the bottle to his lips. ICHABOD chokes.*) Hello, Buzzer!

ICHABOD. Shay, whatsh matter? I thought it was my wife.

INJUN. Don't you know me?

ICHABOD (*comes close to him, peers in his face, starts back astonished*). The devil!

INJUN. No, not quite.

ICHABOD. Well, you're his next door neighbor. Shay, when did you get out of jail?

INJUN. I've been out for two months now. Where's the old woman?

ICHABOD (*tries to straighten up, teeters on his heels*). If you are referring to that gentle antelope, Mrs. Buzzer, the wife of my bosom, she is preparing the evening repast in the lighthouse.

INJUN. I saw Nan out in a boat with a young city feller. Who is he?

ICHABOD. The gentleman you refer to is Mr. Edward Blake from Raleigh. He's our summer boarder.

INJUN. Are you sure he ain't a revenue man?

ICHABOD. Of course he ain't. He's a gentleman of educational and abilities, just like me.

INJUN. What's he doin' out thar with my daughter?

ICHABOD. He ain't *with* your daughter. As fur as I know, you hain't got no daughter.

INJUN. I want to have a talk with the old woman and settle this thing up right now. I want that locket.

ICHABOD. What locket?

INJUN. The locket that was around Nan's neck the night she was stole.

ICHABOD. I dunno nothin' 'bout no locket.

INJUN. It had her mother's picture in it and it'll be a proof who she really is, when I get ready to play my cards.

ICHABOD. You'd better go in and talk to the gentle antelope. She tends to all money matters, while I—I toil and moil to keep her in silks and satins.

INJUN. I'll have to keep an eye on that feller, Blake. I don't like these city dudes nohow. (*Crosses to gate and looks off L.*) They're down there at the wharf now. (*Shades eyes and looks off L.*)

ICHABOD. He's a perfect gentleman, he is. He's teaching Nan to read and write and figger. Pretty soon she'll know as much as her old grandad. But he's a gentleman, just like me, and I'll drink his health. (*Drinks.*) And Injun Jim's a crook out'n the penitentiary, he is, but I'll drink his health, too. (*Drinks.*) And if I've forgotten anybody, why I'll just drink their health, too. (*Drinks.*) Here's to my health and your health, and may your life be long and joyful. May you live to be as old as that gentle antelope of my bosom, Molly Buzzer.

Enter MOLL BUZZER from house.

MOLL. Here! (*Flies at him, bangs his hat over his eyes and grabs the bottle.*) You're a pretty looking spectacle, you are.

ICHABOD (*tries to straighten up, teeters on heels*). Mrs. Buzzer, you got the bottle, allow me to present you with the cork. (*Gives it to her, bows low, nearly loses his balance.*)

MOLL. There's a swell yacht just coming around the point. More visitors. Maybe they'll want supper and lodging. Hurry down to the wharf.

ICHABOD. But, Mrs. Buzzer—

MOLL (*pushing him off*). Run! Fly! They'll want you to help 'em land. Fly, do you hear; fly!

ICHABOD (*straightens up*). Mrs. Buzzer, I can't fly. My wings is too short.

MOLL (*in exasperated tone*). Oh! (*Pushes him out of the gate.*)

INJUN (*coming down R.*). Well, old woman!

MOLL (*turning and seeing him for the first time*). Injun Jim!

INJUN. I reckon I want a few words with you.

MOLL. Well, the fewer the better. I never did like you, Injun Jim, and I don't like you now.

INJUN. Now you listen to me. We'd better come to an understanding.

MOLL. I ain't got no time to talk to you. Got to kill a couple of hens for supper. Go in the house and I'll be back in a minute. (*Exit L. through the gate.*)

INJUN. Go in the house, hey? You bet I'll go in the house and if I once get hands on that locket my fortune is made. (*Exit in house R.*)

NED BLAKE (*outside at L.*). Nan, Nan! Where are you?

Enter NED through gate.

NED. She's hiding from me. Maybe she ran into the lighthouse. (*Crosses to R. and looks in at door.*) A tramp is rummaging through the old lady's papers. He's coming this way. (*Hides behind tree.*)

Enter INJUN JIM from R. with locket.

INJUN. I got it and now that the proof is in my hands I'm settled for life.

NED (*grabs locket*). Don't be too sure of that. (*Orchestra chord.*)

INJUN. Gimme that locket. What right you got to steal it from me?

NED. What right have you to steal it from Mother Buzzer?

INJUN (*draws revolver*). You dunno who you're talking to. (*Levels revolver.*) Now you hand over that locket. I'm a dangerous man.

NED. You dare?

INJUN. Dare? I'd dare anything. Your life is in my hands. I can kill you and throw the body down into the sea. Folks 'ud call it an accident and where is the human being to accuse me?

NAN *runs in from L. and comes between them.*

NAN (*loudly*). Right here!

INJUN. Out of my way, girl! (*Pushes her aside, starts toward NED.*)

NAN (*jumps on his back*). Oh, no you don't! (NAN and NED force INJUN down to ground. NED takes revolver.)

NED. Who is he, Nan?

NAN. I dunno. Never seen nothin' like that around these diggings.

INJUN. You'll find out who I am before I'm through with you. (*Rises.*)

NAN (*pertly*). You look like old Sam Hill to me.

INJUN. I'm an Injun, I am—and an Injun never forgets a wrong.

NED (*removing cartridges from revolver*). There, Mr. Injun, I reckon your little toy pistol won't hurt anybody now. Allow me! (*Bows and presents revolver to INJUN with much ceremony.*)

INJUN (*takes revolver with a snarl*). I'll get even with you for this. I'll get even with both of you. (*Goes to gate at L.*) I'm an Injun, and an Injun never forgets, never forgets. (*Exit L.*)

NAN. I ain't askeered of him. We licked the stuffin' out'n him, didn't we, Mr. Blake?

NED. I wish you'd call me Ned, Nan.

NAN. Oh, I never would dare to call you that, Ned.

NED (*laughs*). And why not?

NAN. 'Cause you're so high and mighty, and me—I'm only Lighthouse Nan.

NED. I don't care if you are. You're the best little pal a fellow ever had. You saved my life just now.

NAN. Did I? (*Pause.*) Honest?

NED. Yes, you did—honest. And I want you to know how grateful I am. If you ever need a friend you can always call on me.

NAN. A friend? You're the first friend I ever had, Mr. Blake.

NED. Ned!

NAN. I mean Ned. Now I got to study my lesson. Want to hear me read?

NED (*sits at L. under bell, she lies flat down on the stage, her chin supported by her two hands.*) Yes, go ahead. I'll be your teacher.

NAN. Before you came here to the lighthouse I never knew nothin'. And now I can read just as good as anybody. Lemme find my lesson. (*Thumbs book, hunting for lesson.*) Here it is. (*Reads slowly.*) The—boy—and—the dog! Will—the—dog—bit—the—boy? No—the—dog—will—not—bite—the—boy. Why—will—not—the—dog—bite—the—boy? (*Speaks.*) 'Cause the boy will kick the stuffing out'n the dog, that's why.

NED. That's too easy. Turn over. (*NAN rolls over, then peers up at him.*)

NAN. That way?

NED. No, turn over in the book. Turn to the last lesson.

NAN (*turns to rear of the book*). Oh, this is awfully hard. Gee! Just look at all them letters. Every word has got about 'leven thousand letters in it. I'll bet there ain't nobody who can read that kind of reading.

NED (*amused*). Oh, yes, you can read it if you try.

NAN (*amazed*). Me? Read all that great big reading?

NED. Certainly.

NAN. Well, I'll try. I know the first word, anyhow. (*Spells.*) T-h-o-s-e, those. That's the beginning—Those. The next word is who.

NED. Very good. You're getting on. Those who what?

NAN (*reading slowly*). Those who have (*spells*) m-o-r-a-l (*pronounces*) more-ale. Those who have more ale.

NED. Not more ale, moral. Those who have moral—. Go on.

NAN (*spells*). C-o-u-r-a-g-e. (*Speaks.*) Gee, that's a whopper.

NED. It isn't hard. (*Spells.*) C-o-u-r-a-g-e. Now what is it? Those who have moral what?

NAN. Those who have moral c-o-u-r-a-g-e, cow-rag. That's it. Those who have moral cow-rag. Say, Mr. Blake, what kind of stuff is this, anyway?

NED. I'm afraid that is a little too hard for you, Nan. Here's a new book I bought for you this morning. It's a grammar.

NAN (*rising*). Oh, I don't want no more books now. Wait till I get over as far as the moral cow-rag.

NED. Come here, Nan. I'll read it to you.

NAN. Come there?

NED (*makes a place for her on the bench*). Yes, come over here.

NAN (*with closed lips signifying refusal*). Umph-umph!

NED. Come on. I won't bite you.

NAN (*takes a step toward him*). Won't you?

NED. No.

NAN (*takes a long slide toward him*). Honest?

NED. Cross my heart.

NAN (*sits on bench*). All right, then. I'll set.

NED (*holds up locket*). Nan, did you ever see this before?

NAN. Nope. We don't get to see much jewelry around the lighthouse. Where did y' get it?

NED. That tramp stole it from Mother Buzzer's table.

NAN. From her table? Well, what do you know about

that? I never knew Mother Buzzer had any jewelry at all. I'll bet a nickel she swiped it off'n some wreck.

NED. See, it opens. (*Opens it.*) And a lady's picture is inside.

NAN (*looking at the locket*). Oh, hain't she jest beautiful? Why, Mr. Blake, that face looks familiar to me. Seems like I've seen it somewhere before.

NED. Where could you have seen it, Nan?

NAN. I don't know. I hain't never been no place but here at the lighthouse, and I know I hain't never seen it no-where's around here. I guess I must have seen it in my dreams. She's awful pretty, ain't she?

NED. Yes. It is the picture of a very beautiful woman.

NAN. And so kind-looking. Look at her eyes. She looks sorter sad, don't she?

NED. Yes, she does. I wonder where Mother Buzzer got that locket.

NAN. Jest where she gets everything else. From a wreck. Mother Buzzer's long on gettin' things from wrecks. What are you going to do with it?

NED. Give it back to the old lady. (*They both bend over and look at the locket.*) Nan, I believe this picture looks like you.

NAN. Oh, it hain't me. I hain't never been that old yet. It's a growed-up lady, it is. It hain't me.

NED. Maybe it's a picture of your mother.

NAN. My mother?

NED. Yes. You don't remember your mother, do you?

NAN. No, Mr. Blake, I don't. She died when I was a little baby. I don't remember her at all. Only sometimes I dream about her. (*Suddenly.*) That's it. That's the face I always dream about. Oh, Mr. Blake, do you reckon she is my sure-enough mother?

NED. That remains to be seen. Why don't you ask Mrs. Buzzer?

NAN. I'm skeerd to. Every time I asks her anything she gives me a wallop 'long side of the head. She don't like me to ask no questions.

Enter MOLL from L. She comes through the gate.

MOLL (*down C.*). Back at last, be ye? What brung ye?

NAN (*holds up her two feet*). Them.

MOLL (*grabs her*). I don't want none of your sass. (*Flings NAN to R. on floor.*)

NAN. Oh, I didn't do nothin'.

MOLL (*raises stick to beat NAN*). I'll show ye!

NED (*comes between them*). You'll do nothing of the sort.

MOLL. You!!

NED. Mother Buzzer, never strike a girl when she's down.

NAN. Nope. Never strike a man when she's down.

MOLL (*growls*). Well, why don't she work more and eat less?

NED. Why don't you teach her more and beat her less?

MOLL. It's laziness, that's what it is. I'll beat it out'n her. (*Starts to strike NAN with cane.*)

NED. No, you'll not. You let her alone. I'm not afraid of you.

NAN (*rises, swings right arm around*). No, I'm not afraid of you. We ain't afraid of her, are we, Mr. Blake? (*Doubles up arm, showing muscle.*)

MOLL. I guess nothin' can be done to a grandmother for beatin' her own child.

NED. That may be true, but you don't beat *this* girl again.

MOLL. She's my own grandarter, ain't she?

NED. I'm not so sure of that.

MOLL. You ain't? (*Changes her tone.*) Well, I loves little Nan, and little Nan loves me.

NAN (*sarcastically*). Oh, yes, she does. When the pigs begin to fly.

MOLL. She knows I wouldn't harm a hair of her little head. When I ain't riled up, I'm jest like reg'lar soothin' syrup, I am.

NED. I came up here from the beach a few minutes ago and I found a man prying around the house.

MOLL. A man? It was Injun Jim. What was he doing, Mr. Blake?

NED. He stole a locket from your table.

MOLL (*alarmed*). A locket! Did Injun Jim steal my locket?

NED. He did.

MOLL. Where is he? I'll have the law on him. I'll send him back to the penitentiary. My locket! The proof that's goin' to make me rich in my old age. Where is he?

NED. He escaped, but I got the locket.

MOLL (*wheelingly*). You did? You got my locket? And you're going to give it back to me, ain't you? You don't mean harm to a poor old woman, do you?

NED. There's your locket, Mrs. Buzzer.

MOLL (*takes it*). Oh, thank you, sir. Thank you.

NED. Now, remember, you're not to mistreat Nan any more.

MOLL. Of course not. I'm jest like reg'lar soothing syrup to my little Nan. I'm such a kind old critter, I am.

NED. She's old enough to go away to school.

MOLL. Oh, we couldn't afford anything like that. She's all we got, Mr. Blake, to comfort us in our old age. (*Changes tone.*) Where's Ichabod, Nan?

NAN. I dunno.

MOLL. There's a yacht full of city folks down at the wharf and he ain't nowheres around to bring 'em up here for supper.

NED. City folks?

MOLL. Yes, I seen 'em from up in the tower. Nan, you go down and bring 'em up here for supper. We need the money. (*Crosses to house.*)

NAN. Remember, you ain't goin' to beat me no more.

MOLL. Beat you, Nan? Why, I'm jest like honey and soothing syrup, I am, jest like honey and soothing syrup. (*Exits in house.*)

NAN. Mr. Blake, you saved me from getting a licking.

NED. If she ever beats you again you come and tell me.

NAN. Yes, but you ain't going to be here always. (*Sadly.*) You'll go away back to the city and I'll never see you no more, Mr. Blake. I'll never see you no more. (*Cries.*)

NED (*comes to her*). And would you care very much, Nan? (*She cries.*) Would you? (*She cries.*) Nan!

NAN. I reckon I would.

NED. Nan, do you know what love is?

NAN (*with closed lips signifying assent*). Um-umph!

NED. You don't love anybody, do you, Nan?

NAN (*as before*). Um-umph!

NED. Who is it, Nan?

NAN. I ain't goin' to tell. You'd think I was a little fool.

NED. Nan, is it possible that you—

Enter ICHABOD from L. He comes through gate.

ICHABOD. Mr. Blake, there's a bunch of city folks down at the wharf. They're asking for you and they're coming up here to see the gentle antelope and get some supper. One of 'em give me a drink, and say, Mr. Blake, I have had drinks and drinks, but this here drink was *some* drink. Now there's Nan. She's jest beginning to climb life's ladder, she is.

NAN. Yes, and it's full of stumbles, too, grandad.

ICHABOD (*stumbles, NAN laughs*). Full of stumbles. Nan, stop laughing at your old grandad's infirm, infirm, infirmities. Your ingratitude breaks me all up. It lowers my spirits. (*Takes out a bottle.*) See, my spirits is lowered. (*Shows bottle empty.*) In fact, I ain't got no spirits left. (*Drunkenly.*) Ain't got no spirits left. Nan, come here.

NAN. I ain't goin' to do it. I don't like you when you've been drinking, grandad.

ICHABOD. Come yere, I say. (*Grabs her.*) Quit yer kickin', ye young mule. Mr. Blake, gimme your hand! Thatsh right. You're a gen'leman, and I'm a gen'leman, and sho is my darter and my grandarter afore her. Nan, I'm a going to jine you two together in the bonds of holy hemlock—

Enter MOLL from house.

MOLL. Ichabod Buzzer, you come in here and set the table.

ICHABOD (*looks at her*). Ladies and gen'lemen, thatsh my wife. That's the gentle antelope of my bosom. I stand up for my wife. I want you all to know that I stand up for my wife. (*Falls down.*)

MOLL. You drunken brute, you can't stand up for yourself! (*Takes his ear.*) Here, you get up there!

ICHABOD. Hold on, there, my gentle antelope; hold on.

MOLL. I *am* a-holdin' on.

ICHABOD. When I shay hold on, Mrs. Buzzer, I mean, let go.

MOLL. You get into the house and set the table.

ICHABOD (*on heels*). Mrs. Buzzer, you've got the wrong pig by the ear this time.

MOLL (*pulls his ear*). I'll show ye.

ICHABOD. Ouch! Oh, would that I had never become the husband of any woman under the sun. Would that I were single again.

MOLL. I'll single ye! (*Pulls him toward house.*) Come along, I say. I'll make you pay for them few remarks, er my name hain't Moll Buzzer. (*Drags him into the house.*)

NED. I'll go down to the wharf, Nan, and see who the city folks are. Maybe I know them. Do you want to come along?

NAN. Nope. I dassent. Gotter wait table at supper. 'Cause if I don't, I won't get nothin' to eat, and I'm so hungry my stomach feels as though my throat's been cut.

NED. I won't be long. (*Exits L.*)

NAN. Ain't he just grand! Gee, I wisht I was a fine lady with a good eddication. Maybe he'd take a shine to me then. But he'll go away and forget all about me, and I 'spect I'll have to be an old maid till I die, 'cause I ain't goin' to marry no longshoreman, if I live to be thirty. I'd ruther climb up in a 'simmon tree and eat 'simmons like a no-count possum all my days. I ain't nothin' to him, and he hain't nothin' to me, but I wisht things was different—I wisht I was a lady—I wisht I had a eddication and a fine satin dress with a long tail, and false hair, and a fan—then I'd have a chance. But I ain't nothin',

nothin' but Lighthouse Nan. (*Goes to gate and looks off L.*) He's laffin' and talkin' with the city folks. I reckon they're friends of his'n and now he'll go away and forget all about the little gal who saved his life down by the sea. (*Crosses to R.*) I'm goin' to hide. I ain't a goin' to have 'em poke fun at me jest 'cause I hain't got no eddication. (*Talking and laughter heard off L.*) He's walking with some city gal. Maybe she's his sweetheart. Look at her hold up her head, jest like she owned all the plum earth and half o' Kingdom Come. Darn her! I'd like to give her a kick on the shins. (*Hides back of clothes on the line.*)

Enter NED from L. escorting the HON. SARAH CHUMLEY-CHOKE and MR. ENLOW.

SARAH. Ned, you are looking awfully fit. It's positively weird what the sea air has done for you. (*Looks around.*) Is this the lighthouse?

NED (*down L.*). Yes, this is the place.

MR. ENLOW. You say we can get accommodations here for the night?

NED. I am sure you can. It's rough fare, Mr. Enlow, but it's better than being at anchor all night in your motor boat.

MR. E. (*looks around, down L.*). Where are Hortense and Arthur?

SARAH (*looks off L.*). Here they come now. They say that lovers are proverbially tardy. Is that so, Neddy?

NED. I'm sure I don't know. I'm not a lover. That is, not yet.

SARAH. Not yet? I wonder what he means by that, Mr. Enlow. Wouldn't it be positively weird if Neddy would fall in love with one of the village milkmaids? I'd love to see Neddy milk a cow. (*Laughs.*)

MR. E. (*crosses to R.*). There doesn't seem to be any-one about.

NED. I think Mrs. Buzzer is getting supper.

SARAH. Buzzer? Is it possible that there are people on earth named Buzzer? Weird, positively weird.

NED (*at rear C.*). And the old lady is just as weird as her name. Wait till you see her.

Enter HORTENSE ENLOW and SIR ARTHUR CHOKE from L. He carries a rifle.

HORTENSE ENLOW. What a horrible place.

SARAH (*at R. with Mr. E.*). Horrible, Hortense? It's worse than horrible! It's weird, positively weird.

SIR ARTHUR. Surely, we're not expected to spend the night here?

MR. E. Sure. It's better than staying on deck with a couple of dead motors.

HORTENSE (*at L. C.*). This is just like a novel, Artie. Cast upon a desert island. Stranded in a lighthouse. (*Laughs.*)

NED. I see you've brought your rifle, Sir Arthur.

SIR ARTHUR. Yes, dear boy. Thought probably I might take a shot at a duck, doncherknow.

NED. Plenty of 'em around here. Geese, too.

SARAH. Only fancy! I'd love to see a little wild goose. They're so poetical.

SIR ARTHUR. I much prefer to hunt the larger game. I had quite a reputation as a tiger hunter in India.

HORTENSE. How brave you must be, Arthur.

SIR ARTHUR. Oh, so, so! You know, Neddy, when one had hunted elephants and tigers in India, you know—that things like ducks and geese seem awfully tame, you know! Really, Hortense, I'm not afraid of anything. (*Stands near clothes line. NAN back of the line suddenly flirts the arm of a white garment in his face.*)

NAN (*concealed by clothes on line*). Booh!

SIR ARTHUR (*jumps back, much alarmed*). By Jove! What was that? It's spirits. That garment seemed to jump right at me. Really, I'm quite upset.

NED (*draws garments aside, disclosing NAN*). You needn't be afraid, Sir Arthur. It's only Nan.

ALL. Nan?

HORTENSE (*stares through lorgnette*). And who, pray, is Nan?

NAN. It's me. I'm Nan. Just Lighthouse Nan.

SARAH (*staring at her*). Really! What a queer looking creature.

SIR ARTHUR. Rather good looking, I say. A regular nymph of the sea. She is, by Jove!

NED (*bringing her forward*). I want to introduce you to my friends, Nan.

NAN. Oh, I know 'em already by your prescriptions of 'em.

NED. This is Sir Arthur Choke. He's a speculator.

NAN. A speckled tater? (*Giggles.*) Excuse my giggles, mister, but I ain't never seen a real live speckled tater afore.

SIR ARTHUR. By Jove! What a charming little mermaid. A regular nymph of the sea. She is, really.

NED. And this is Miss Enlow. Miss Hortense Enlow.

NAN. Howdy, Miss Enlow. (*HORTENSE stares at her from head to foot through lorgnette.*) Oh, you pore thing! Ain't your eyesight real good? It must be awful to have to wear speckle-tails at your age. You orter try Winkses' eye-salve, if you can't see good. It's kinder green and greasy but it's a heap sight better'n carryin' them speckle-tails 'round with you all the time.

NED. And this is the Honorable Sarah Chumley-Choke.

NAN. Gee, I should think you would choke with a name like that. (*Giggles.*)

SARAH (*raises parasol in NAN's face*). Don't be impertinent, little girl. (*Crosses to rear.*)

NAN. Golly, umbrelly up and not a cloud in sight.

NED. That's a parasol, Nan, to keep the sun off.

NAN. A pollysol? Humph! She's a-skeerd she'll melt her face, ain't she?

NED. And this is my dearest friend, my second father, Mr. Enlow.

MR. E. I'm glad to meet you, Miss Nan. (*Offers hand.*)

NAN (*wiping her own hand on dress*). Are you?

MR. E. I surely am. Any friend of Ned's is a friend of mine.

NAN (*grasping his hand and shaking it violently up and*

down). Much obliged, mister. Say, you're all right, you are. I gotta hunch that I'm goin' to like you.

MR. E. Thank you. And now, Ned, don't you think we'd better see about some supper.

SIR ARTHUR. Ah, yes. I'm deucedly hungry, by Jove! A sail on the water always gives me an appetite. It does, really.

NED. Then all of you come along. I'll find Mother Buzzer and see if you can have rooms for the night.

SARAH. I want a room with a bahth, Ned. I simply must have a room with a bahth.

NAN (*points to lighthouse*). There's the room, lady. (*Points to ocean.*) And there's the ocean. It's the biggest bahth on earth. It sure is.

NED (*at door*). Step right this way.

MR. E. (*escorting SARAH*). We'll have to put up with whatever they offer. If we don't we'll spend the night in the motor boat. (*Exit R.*)

SARAH. And that would be dreadful. Heavens, what a horrible place. (*Exit R.*)

SIR ARTHUR (*down L., talking to NAN*). I should like to stay a whole week in this delightful nook. It's so picturesque, doncherknow. And would you teach me how to sail a boat and how to fish, my little charmer?

NAN. Don't you know how to sail a boat and fish, mister?

SIR ARTHUR. No, I'm afraid I don't.

NAN. Gee, you're awfully iggerunt, ain't you?

HORTENSE (*at C.*). Are you coming, Arthur? (*He pays no attention, but talks to NAN in pantomime, she laughing at him.*)

NED (*at R. C.*). His lordship seems quite taken with the place, doesn't he, Hortense?

HORTENSE (*goes to SIR ARTHUR*). Sir Arthur, I was speaking to you. (*He pays no attention, she pulls his coat*). Do you know you are neglecting me shamefully.

SIR ARTHUR. Oh, I beg pardon, I do really. I was just admiring a bit of the landscape, that's all. 'Pon my honor.

HORTENSE. You were admiring that little roustabout. (*Crosses to R.*) When you have quite finished admiring the landscape maybe you'll deign to come with me. (*Exit R. loftily.*)

SIR ARTHUR (*following her with short steps*). Aw, now, Miss Hortense, don't be so deuced hard on a fellow. It isn't my fault that I have such an eye for beauty. It isn't, really. (*At door R., turns.*) Adieu, you dear, delightful little nymph of the lighthouse. Au revoir.

NAN (*at L., waves her hand to him*). Olive oil, mister, olive oil.

SIR ARTHUR. Over the river. (*Exit R.*)

NED (*C.*). Nan, I didn't think you were a flirt.

NAN. I ain't. I'm just a girl, Mr. Blake. And it's just as natural for a girl to have a little fun as it is for a big red rose to bloom in the sunshine. You ain't goin' to blame the big red rose for blooming, are you, Mr. Blake?

NED (*crosses to her*). Nan, little girl, you have the soul of a true poet. If you had an education you'd be a wonderful success in society.

NAN. Would you like me any better, Mr. Blake, if I had a eddication?

NED. Of course I would.

NAN. Then, by heck, I'm goin' to git eddicated or bust!

NED. Such expressions, Nan. I'm astonished.

NAN. That's what Daddy Buzzer allers says.

NED. But you are a young lady now and he's an old fisherman.

NAN. And can't I say them kind of 'spressions no more?

NED. Not if you ever expect to be a true lady, Nan.

NAN. All right, Mr. Blake. I won't never say "by heck!" no more. I won't, by heck!

NED. Nan!

NAN. Oh, excuse me. They jest kinder slipped out. (*They laugh.*)

Enter MOLL from L.

MOLL. Here, you! Supper's ready. Ring the bell and call the boys up from their nets. They'll have to wait till

second table tonight, 'cause we got quality folks for supper and quality folks won't eat with common fishermen. Ring the bell and don't be all day. Then come in here and wait on table. (*Exits L.*)

NAN. That's just the way! Jest as soon as I'm beginning to enjoy myself she's got to come along and bust up the whole business. (*Rings bell.*)

NED. Well, I'd better be getting in to supper. Coming, Nan?

NAN. Yep. I got to wait on table and swipe what eatings I kin get. 'Cause if I don't there won't be nothin' left but the dishes.

NED (*opens door for her*). Allow me!

NAN. Allow you what? (*Sees door.*) Gee, Mr. Blake, I kin open the door myself. I ain't crippled in me two hands. I gotta hurry er I won't get a bite to eat and if I don't I'll raise the roof, by heck! (*Runs out L., followed by NED, laughing.*)

Several FISHERMEN enter from R., group around bell and sing some nautical or old-fashioned song, then exeunt at L. The stage grows a little darker and the bunch lights in the entrances are shaded red.

Enter INJUN JIM from L. He comes stealthily down C.

INJUN. Humph! No one around. I reckon they're all eating supper. The swells is here all right. (*Looks in house.*) And they look like they'd be easy pickings. Buzzer'll keep 'em all night and Injun Jim will go back to his old tricks.

MOLL (*off L.*). Nan, Nan, come yere!

INJUN. The old woman is coming. I'll just lay low for a spell. I ain't got no love fer old Moll Buzzer, if she is my dear, old mother-in-law. (*Crosses to L.*) She's got too long a tongue in her head to suit me. I'll just lay low. (*Exits L.*)

Enter MOLL from R., followed by NAN with basket.

MOLL. Now yere's the basket and there's the clothes. Git 'em in and git 'em in right away. It looks like a storm

and I don't aim to have all my work for nothin'. Hurry up!

NAN (*begins to put clothes in basket, taking them from the line*). All right, I'm a hurryin'.

MOLL. Don't be all night about it. I got to git back to the dining room afore them fishermen eats me out'n house and home. Such appetites! They're sendin' me on the road to the poorhouse every day I board 'em. I wisht I was rid of the old place forever. (*Exits R.*)

NAN (*runs to R. entrances and makes a "face" after her*). Mean old thing! Makes me work like a nigger field-hand and don't gimme nothin' to eat but bread and sorghum. I don't believe she's my grandmother at all. Grandmothers don't treat girls like that. My mother wasn't old Moll Buzzer's child. (*Passionately.*) She wasn't, she wasn't, *she wasn't!* (*Sees ARTHUR's gun.*) Gee, look at the fancy gun the city man left out here where it'll get all over dew and things. I'll wipe it off and take it up to his room. (*Takes gun.*) I gotta big notion to go down in the piney patch and see if I can scare up a Mollie Cottontail. If I do! (*Aims gun.*) Well, I reckon I'll have fried rabbit fer breakfast. That's a heap sight better'n bread and sorghum. I'll do it. Now, Mollie Cottontail look out, kase I'm a natural born shooter and I'm after you, I'm after you. (*Skips out L.*)

After a slight pause enter SARAH from R. She comes down C.

SARAH. The lighthouse is stifling, positively stifling, and the soft ocean breeze out here is so romantic. I'd love to live in a simple cottage down by the sea, but it must have a bahth, that's a positive fact, it must have a bahth.

Enter INJUN JIM from L.

INJUN. Good evening, lady.

SARAH. It's one of the fishermen! How romantic! Good evening, sir.

INJUN. I'm a poor man, miss, and I'm out'n a job. Could you give me a little help?

SARAH. No, I never give anything to beggars.

INJUN. I ain't no beggar, ma'am. I'm just a poor man. I've got a starving wife and fambly at home. I need money. (*Grabs her wrist.*)

SARAH. How dare you? Let me go!

INJUN. Not jest yet. I want some money. I'm starving.

SARAH (*struggling with him*). I'll scream!

Enter NAN from L.

NAN. Hold on there, Injun Jim. Throw up your hands! (*Levels gun.*)

INJUN. Curse you, I'll—(*starts toward NAN.*)

NAN. Stand right where you are. Kase if you don't this here thing might go off and blow you clean into Kingdom Come. Stand right where you are!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Same scene as Act I. A light wagon stands at rear C., supposed to be drawn by a horse concealed from the audience by the lighthouse. This wagon should be worked forward and backward now and then by someone concealed by the house, to give the audience the effect of a restless horse. ICHABOD sits on seat of wagon as the curtain rises.

Lights one-quarter down, but strong yellow light from L.

ICHABOD (*as the wagon backs*). Whoa, thar, January. Ain't you got no sense at all? Whoa, darn ye! (*Cracks whip.*) That there mule gets more and more like the wife of my bosom every day he lives. I never see such a contrary critter. (*Wagon moves forward.*) Whoa, there! Stand still, January. Mollie! Mollie! Come yere and hold January till I git him hitched. Mollie! Nan! Where be ye? (*Wagon backs.*) Whoa, there! (*Cracks whip, the wagon is suddenly pulled out at R.*) Whoa, there! Whoa! Gee, haw! (*Wagon backed onto the stage.*) January, I'm astonished at ye, I shore am. Whoa!

MOLL *enters from R. She goes up C. to wagon.*

MOLL. Ichabod Buzzer, where you going?

ICHABOD. I ain't goin' nowhere, yit. I've done been where I'm going. (*Wagon pulled a little to R.*) Whoa! Gee! Haw! Mrs. Buzzer, jis' take a hold of January's head and hold him till I git out and hitch.

MOLL. I don't see why you keep sech a mean, pesky, obstinate old mule that ain't worth his salt. Jest fer all the world like his master. (*Exit R., back of house.*)

ICHABOD. Whoa, there, January. Stiddy, stiddy! (*Gets out of cart.*) Here, Mollie, I'll hitch him. (*Goes out at R.*) Whoa, there, January!

MOLL enters from R. She comes down L.

MOLL. Ichabod, where's Nan? Here I am with a house full of city folks on my hands since last week and her gad-ding 'round the country goodness only knows where. They're goin' to leave tomorrow and I'll be downright glad of it.

ICHABOD enters from R. He comes down C.

ICHABOD. What say, Mrs. Buzzer?

MOLL. Ain't you got no ears? I said I'd be glad when this passle of city folks gits their boat fixed and goes away. I gotta work like a reg'lar slave for 'em.

ICHABOD. Means lots of money for us, Mrs. Buzzer. I ain't had sich a good time sence Heck was a pup.

MOLL. I likes their money as well as you do, but I'm gittin' sick and tired of waitin' on them two grown women. They treat me like a human slave.

ICHABOD. Well, I reckon they're goin' to leave tomorrow.

MOLL. Say, has the old man said anything to you about knowin' our gal, Liza?

ICHABOD. Not a word. I reckon he's done forgot all about Liza. That was fifteen years ago.

MOLL. Well, I reckon I'm goin' to refresh his memory.

ICHABOD. You ain't goin' to tell him about Nan, are ye?

MOLL. I'm goin' to tell him when the time comes. She's his own darter and he ain't got sense enough to know it. And that Hortense gal with her fine airs and her bossy man-

ners is our own grandchild, Buzzer. Our own flesh and blood.

ICHABOD. I'd a heap sight ruther have little Nan for a grandchild.

MOLL. You ain't got no sense now and you never did have no sense. We'll make John Enlow pay us a pretty penny for the up-bringin' of his own child. And my lady Hortense, I reckon she'll sing a different tune when she finds out that she's the child of Injun Jim and my darter Liza.

ICHABOD. I'm kinder skeerd how it's all goin' to come out. Maybe they'll send us to prison. And I'm an old man, Mollie darlin' and a pore old man. (*Wagon backs.*) Whoa, there, January! That durn mule is gittin' more skittish every day.

MOLL. Why don't you put him in the barn?

ICHABOD. I'm goin' to drive the city folkses over to Gibbons Rock to see the sun set.

MOLL. They'd better stay at home.

ICHABOD. Goin' to give me two dollars for the trip.

MOLL. Two dollars, hey? Well, you see you hand it over to me.

ICHABOD. Now, Mollie, I got to git me some cough medicine, 'cause I got a misery in my chest.

MOLL. You're goin' to git some whisky, Ichabod Buzzer. But you'll hand over that money to me er I'll know the reason why.

ICHABOD. I was calculatin' on gittin' some dry goods fer you, darlin'.

MOLL. You mean wet goods fer yourself. I know you!

ICHABOD. I saw Injun Jim down at the wharf today. What you reckon he's hanging 'round here fer?

MOLL. Fer no good. If I had my way they'd send him back to the penitentiary and keep him there fer life.

ICHABOD. Do you reckon he's goin' to tell old man Enlow that Nan is his darter?

MOLL. He'd better not. That's *my* business. I'm the only one who's got the proof and Injun Jim could talk his

head off'n his body and not git a cent, less'n he's got proofs. And I got the papers. And what Moll Buzzer's got, she keeps.

ICHABOD. I reckon the old man 'ud pay right handsome for them proofs.

MOLL. You bet he will, when the time comes. But I ain't goin' to run no risk of bein' sent to prison. I'm a wise woman, Buzzer, I'm shore goin' to bide my time.

ICHABOD. Seems right funny he's yere under the same roof with his own darter and he don't know it.

MOLL. He'll know it when the time comes.

ICHABOD (*as wagon backs*). Whoa, there, January.

MOLL. You drive that critter 'round to the back door. I guess the city folks ain't too good to git in your wagon at the back door.

ICHABOD (*climbs in the wagon*). Loosen him up, Mollie. Whoa, there, January. (*Exit MOLL at rear R.*) Gee, haw! Gee dap, January. Gee dap. (*The wagon is pulled off at R.*)

Squawking of a hen heard off L. Enter NAN from L. with straw sticking to her clothes and hair. She carries a hen and an old door knob. Comes down C.

NAN. Ah, ha! Miss Biddy Hen, you thought you'd hide away where nobody could find you, did you? Clean under the old barn, hey? Settin' agin, wasn't you? I swan, you ain't got no sense at all. Settin' all day on a old chiney door-knob. You're so skinny you kin hardly walk. (*Throws door-knob on stage.*) Hain't you shamed of yourself? Ain't you now? What you reckon you was tryin' to do? Hatch out a old door-handle or a bunch of marbles? (*Swings hen by feet.*) Quit your squawkin'. I'll larn you better manners. (*Holds up hen.*) You know what I'm goin' to do with you? Hey? I'm goin' to bapsouse you. I'm goin' to teach you better sense by bapsousin' you in the old rain barrel. (*Goes to barrel.*) Now, Miss Biddy Hen, you're goin' to git bapsoused. (*Leans in barrel.*)

Enter SIR ARTHUR from R.

SIR ARTHUR. Aw, by Jove! It's the little rustic Venus.

NAN (*her head in the barrel*). See the water, Miss Biddy Hen. Quit yer squawkin' 'cause yer time has done come.

SIR ARTHUR (*goes to her*). Nan, what are you going to do? (*Takes her arm.*)

NAN. Ouch! Let go. (*Looks at him.*) Gee, I thought it was old Mammy Buzzer.

SIR ARTHUR. What are you doing?

NAN. Goin' to bapsouse this old biddy hen.

SIR ARTHUR. Are you going to drown her?

NAN. Nope. Just goin' to make a good old Baptist out'n her. Name this yere girl, Miss Biddy Hen. (*Dips hen in barrel.*) One, two, three, and out goes she! Now will you be good, or will you go on settin' on door-knobs? My, ain't she mad! Look at her, mister. Shoo, shoo, shoo! (*Chases hen out at L.*)

Enter HORTENSE from R.

SIR ARTHUR (*chasing hen*). Shoo, shoo, shoo! (*Runs around stage and bends low as if to catch the hen. He runs down to HORTENSE, not seeing her as his head is down. He is close to her.*)

HORTENSE. Sir Artie, have you taken leave of your senses?

SIR ARTHUR. By Jove! Only think of that now. (*Looks up at her.*)

HORTENSE. If you are playing tag with this young person, pray don't let me interrupt you.

SIR ARTHUR. Playing tag? Oh, no. We were only bapsousing the hen.

HORTENSE (*sits at R.*). Indeed?

NAN. Yes, indeed. Don't you 'low him to bapsouse a hen?

HORTENSE. Are you speaking to me, my good girl?

NAN. Sure, I am. Didn't you hear me? You must be deaf as well as nearsighted.

SIR ARTHUR. I've just been getting up a little party. We're all going to drive over to Gibbons Rock to see the sun set.

HORTENSE. I have a frightful headache. I couldn't stand the drive. It's such a bore.

NAN. Oh, it's all right. Old mule January 'll git you there quicker'n greased lightning.

HORTENSE (*rises, but leaves her shawl on seat*). I think I'll go to my room.

SIR ARTHUR. Permit me to escort you.

HORTENSE (*sarcastically*). Oh, I couldn't think of troubling you. Perhaps you and this person wish to bap-souse some more hens.

SIR ARTHUR. Now, my dear Hortense, be reasonable.

HORTENSE. You ask too much, Sir Arthur. I'll be reasonable when we are back in town away from this wretched place. (*Goes to door.*)

SIR ARTHUR. But, really, you know—

HORTENSE. I fear I am interrupting your sport. If you see my father kindly tell him to come to my room. (*Exits at R. proudly.*)

NAN (*crossing to R., imitating HORTENSE's walk and voice*). I fear I am interrupting your sport. If you see my father kindly tell him to come to my room. Jiminy crickets, what a long tail our cat *has* got.

SIR ARTHUR. Do you know, my dear, you are positively bewitching, you are really.

NAN (*comes to him*). Do you think so?

SIR ARTHUR. Indeed, I do, 'pon my honor. If you would only fly with me to the city what a bewitching little couple we should make. Just you and me. Wouldn't that be nice?

NAN. Nope. I can't fly, 'cause my wings ain't sprouted yet.

SIR ARTHUR. I could take you there in a yacht. Wouldn't you love to see the great, big, beautiful city?

NAN. Oh, yes, I've always wanted to see the city.

SIR ARTHUR. And then we could sail across the ocean and go to my estates in England.

NAN. Have you got estates in England?

SIR ARTHUR. Indeed I have.

NAN. So you're an Englishman, are you?

SIR ARTHUR. Indeed I am, and I'm proud of it.

NAN (*to audience*). I allers knowed something was the matter with him.

SIR ARTHUR. I'm over here to see your country. America is a beastly big place, doncherknow.

NAN. Englishmen never *kin* believe how fast we grow in this country. They don't believe George Washington ever made them git out of it neither, but he did. Ned told me all about it.

SIR ARTHUR. Yes, but England is a far greater country, you know. Our country has grown up! But you have to get emigrants to help build up *your* country, and then (*shrugging shoulders*) what are they?

NAN. That's so. They don't amount to nothin' much until they come here to America and inhale the fresh and free air of liberty. Then they become American citizens and they amount to a great deal. For we send 'em out west to build it up, and the west feeds the world.

SIR ARTHUR. Feeds the world? What nonsense. America doesn't feed old England, you know.

NAN. Oh, yes we do. You bet your boots we've fed old England. We gave you a warm breakfast in 1776, and boiling dinner in 1812!

SIR ARTHUR. But really, my dear Miss Nan—

NAN (*interrupts*). I ain't your dear Miss Nan. Your dear Miss Hortense is in the house and I reckon you'd better toddle along to her. She might get lonesome, doncherknow.

SIR ARTHUR. By Jove! I believe you are spoofing me, you know.

NAN. Good-bye, Sir Arthur, I gotta go and give old mule January a feed of hay.

SIR ARTHUR (*at door R.*). We shall meet again, my little rustic beauty.

NAN. Oh, tie a tin can on that stuff.

SIR ARTHUR. Farewell! (*Exit R.*)

NAN. He makes me tired. He ain't the least like Mr.

Blake. Now, *he* don't never make me tired. He's jes' the grandest man. My, I shore wisht I was a fine lady like Miss Hortense. But it ain't no use. Everybody makes fun of me. I can't walk like her and I can't talk like her. If I only had some nice shoes and a long-tail dress like her'n, maybe it 'ud be different. Oh, there's her shawl. I reckon she done forgot it. I'll jest see how it 'ud look on me. (*Puts it around her.*) Gee, I bet I look swell. But I'd rather have a tail to my dress. (*Arranges shawl like a train.*) Oh, I kin feel a difference already. If I could only do it like she does. (*Walks around affectedly.*) Good evening, my dear. It's a pleasant evening this evening, isn't it? If it is as pleasant tomorrow evening as it is this evening we'll be having a right pleasant evening tomorrow evening. (*Gets train between feet as she walks faster and faster. Finally she trips on train and falls C.*) Oh, gee! I bumped my nose and busted the only shin I got.

Enter NED from L. He watches her amused.

NED (*laughs*). What's the matter, Nan?

NAN (*on floor*). What you laughing at? Huh? (*Rises.*) Maybe you think I can't do it? (*Stalks majestically across stage to R., turns.*) Good evening, Mr. Blake.

NED (*seriously*). Good evening, Miss Buzzer.

NAN (*changes her tone, comes to him*). You kin call me Nan if you want to. (*Takes off shawl.*) Now, there's my tail fixin', I ain't a fine lady no more. I'm jest Lighthouse Nan.

NED. A sudden change from a hot house orchid back to the little wild rose of the mountains.

NAN. Say, Mr. Blake, are you goin' to marry Miss Hortense?

NED. Of course not. I'm not high and mighty enough for Hortense. She expects to marry Sir Arthur and become one of the nobility.

NAN. I'd a hap sight ruther marry you.

NED (*amused*). You would?

NAN. Yes. Now, you think I ain't got any sense, don't you?

NED. Not at all. I'll confess that I once was madly infatuated with Hortense, but that was before I recognized my true feelings. She is like a beautiful magnolia, superb, glorious and radiant. And the magnolia might have been made the queen of all the flowers, if there had never been a rose. And I have found a rose, Nan, a little, nestling wild rose growing in the free air of the hills and the sea, fresh and fragrant in its delicate purity.

NAN. Oh, gee, Mr. Blake, you talk jest like the Bible.

NED. Nan, you are my wild rose—

Enter ICHABOD from R.

ICHABOD (*interrupting*). Whoa, there, January. Back up. (*Wagon backs in at rear.*)

NED. It's Daddy Buzzer!

ICHABOD. Air you folks all ready? It's about time to drive over to the Rock. Old January is ready and old January as a rule don't like to wait. (*Wagon moves forward.*) Whoa, there, durn ye. Whoa!

NED. I'll call the folks. (*Goes to door and exits R.*)

NAN. Daddy Buzzer, you had to come drivin' in with January jest when Ned was finding his wild rose.

ICHABOD. Wall, did he find it?

NAN. I reckon he did. But she didn't git a chance to give him no encouragement.

Enter NED from R., followed by SIR ARTHUR, MR. ENLOW, HORTENSE, SARAH and MOLL.

ICHABOD. Come on, now. Pile in. Whoa, there, January.

MR. E. We're going to have supper over by the Rock.

NAN. Then I reckon I'd better be counted in. If there's eats I don't wanter miss nothin'.

HORTENSE. Disgusting.

SIR ARTHUR. Miss Nan. Oh, I say, Miss Nan!

NAN. Go ahead and say it.

SIR ARTHUR. Suppose you and I should walk over to the Rock.

NAN. That's a good idea. Old January is going to have a load as it is.

MOLL. Ichabod Buzzer, you git down off'n that wagon and walk. I'll do the driving.

ICHABOD. But, my darling, I got a misery in my back and the rheumatiz in both feet.

MOLL. You'll have a misery in your head if you don't do as I say. (*He gets down.*)

NAN. Don't you want to walk with us, Mr. Blake?

NED. I'd be delighted.

NAN. Then come on. I'll race the both of you to that old cottonwood tree. (*Points R.*) Are you game? Come on! One, two, three, go! (*Runs out at R.*)

MOLL (*in wagon*). Whoa, there, January.

ICHABOD. I hope old January kicks the life out'n the wagon.

MR. E. (*to HORTENSE, down R.*). Come, daughter.

HORTENSE. I've decided not to go. I don't care to associate with these people.

ICHABOD. Well, I'll be durned. These people! Humph! (*Stalks out at R.*)

MOLL (*as wagon starts out R.*). Whoa, there, January. Back up. Gee! Haw!

SARAH. Isn't it weird?

MR. E. (*helping SARAH in wagon*). There, now. Up you go. I think I'll walk.

MOLL. Is that all the load I'm goin' to git?

MR. E. Yes, that's all. Drive on.

MOLL. Well, it'll cost ye two dollars jist the same. Gid ap, January. (*Wagon does not move.*) Gid ap, I say. (*Cracks whip.*) That 'ere old mule is as obstinate as a man. Gid ap! (*Clucks at horse.*) I'll show ye! (*Cracks whip at horse, wagon suddenly pulled off at R.*)

MR. E. You'd better reconsider, daughter.

HORTENSE. I have a headache. Please leave me alone.

MR. E. But you better not stay here. You know what an experience Sarah had with a tramp the first night we came.

HORTENSE. I'm not Sarah and I'm not afraid. He hasn't been seen around the lighthouse since.

MR. E. (*at R.*). Well, I don't like to leave you alone.

HORTENSE. Don't worry about me. If anyone comes I'll scream and the fishermen will hear me. You'd better hurry along.

MR. E. Good-bye. (*Exit R.*)

HORTENSE (*at R.*). Good-bye. (*Comes down R. C.*) I'll be glad when we get away from this horrible spot. I hate it and I hate to mingle with these common fishing people. Thank heavens, I was born in a different sphere of life. If I had to live in a hole like this it would be the death of me.

Enter INJUN JIM from L.

INJUN (*at L. C.*). Excuse me, lady, kin I have a few words with you?

HORTENSE. I have nothing for you, my good man.

INJUN. Jest as proud as the other one, hey. Well, I reckon I'll take down your pride a peg, my lady.

HORTENSE. Out of my way. Let me pass. (*Starts to gate L.*)

INJUN (*intercepting her*). Hold on thar. I got somethin' to say to you and you ain't goin' to pass until I say it.

HORTENSE. I told you I had nothing for you. I never give to beggars.

INJUN. Beggars? I ain't no beggar. I'm an honest man, I am.

HORTESE (*angrily*). I don't care whether you are or not. Let me pass or I'll scream for help.

INJUN. Oh, no, you won't. Nobody could hear you if you did.

HORTENSE (*alarmed*). I have no money with me and no jewels.

(The stage grows a little darker.)

INJUN. I ain't after no money ner jewels, lady. At least not now. And I don't mean you no harm. All I want is to have you listen to a little story I want to tell you.

HORTENSE. I don't care to hear your story. My father—

INJUN. Your what?

HORTENSE. I was about to say that my father would attend to your wants. Now let me pass.

INJUN. Who d' y' mean by father? Do you mean John Enlow?

HORTENSE. Yes, John Enlow is my father.

INJUN. Your father? (*Laughs.*) John Enlow, your father? Ha, ha, ha! You might think he is, my lady, but he ain't.

HORTENSE (*shrinking away*). What do you mean?

INJUN (*boldly*). Jest what I say. John Enlow ain't no more your father than he is my father.

HORTENSE (*looks at him a moment, then laughs scornfully*). You are insane.

INJUN. Insane, am I? You listen a little while to my story and then say I'm insane if you dare.

HORTENSE. It's blackmail. You are trying to frighten me in order to get money. I'll not listen to you. If you have anything to say, speak to my father.

INJUN. Speak to him, hey? Oh, no, I reckon it's you I have to speak to. (*Comes to her at R., changes tone, speaking roughly.*) Now see here. You set down and listen to what I've got to say. Hear me! Set down! (*She complies weakly.*)

HORTENSE. Oh, you shall suffer for this, you shall suffer for this. You coward, to attack a helpless woman.

INJUN. I ain't goin' to harm you, I tell you. I ain't even going to touch you. It's a matter of business with me. I got some information and it's for sale, and you are going to buy it. That's all. Now do you understand?

HORTENSE. Go on. Say what you have to say and leave me.

INJUN. A pretty little story it is, too. It goes back fifteen er sixteen years.

HORTENSE. Sixteen years?

INJUN. Yes. Jest about that long ago I was a fisherman on the Mary Enlow, one of John Enlow's boats.

HORTENSE. Your past life is nothing to me.

INJUN. Oh, hain't it? Well, I reckon it is. John Enlow

and his wife came down her 'long about that time to inspect the fishing fleet. And their little gal was with them. She wasn't much more'n a baby then. About two or three years old, I reckon. Maybe less. Yes, come to think of it, she was jist beginnin' to toddle.

HORTENSE. I think I know what you are going to say. I have heard the story many times from my father. You refer to the time I was abducted.

INJUN. There was some bad men in that fishing fleet, some desperate bad men. Some of 'em had had prison records and they didn't care who knowed it. They was a bad lot and desperate. They'd a done anything fer money.

HORTENSE. I know it. I was stolen by some of those men.

INJUN. John Enlow's little gal was stolen—that's more like it.

HORTENSE (*rises*). What do you mean? I am the daughter of John Enlow.

INJUN (*close to her*). Oh, no you hain't. John Enlow's darter was stole sixteen years ago, and she hain't never yet been found.

HORTENSE (*passionately*). It's a lie.

INJUN. It's the truth.

HORTENSE. You are trying to blackmail me. You coward.

INJUN. I hain't tryin' nothin'. Two men stole that little baby, hoping to hold her fer a big reward; but John Enlow put the bulls after 'em, and they got cold feet. They was afraid to claim the reward.

HORTENSE. I fail to see how this romance can interest me. It is true that I was kidnapped when I was a child, but after a few weeks I was restored to my father's house.

INJUN. Wait a minute and you'll see how this little romance interests you, my lady. One of the men who stole the kid was a married man himself. He was married to the daughter of the old lighthouse keeper there in that house. (*Points to house.*) His wife had a little baby just about the same age as John Enlow's child. Well, that man

was nabbed by the bulls and sent up fer twelve years fer smuggling. His wife was left alone here at the lighthouse. Alone, with two babies on her hands.

HORTENSE (*alarmed*). Two babies?

INJUN. Yes, ma'am, two of 'em, and jest as like as two peas in a pod. She didn't know what to do. She was poor and couldn't keep both of the children.

HORTENSE. So she gave me back to my father.

INJUN. Wait a minute. It's true she took a baby back to John Enlow. But it wasn't his own baby. Not much. She waren't goin' to let *her* baby grow up into a lighthouse brat, so she give her own baby to John Enlow to be brung up rich and she kep' the stolen baby fer herself.

HORTENSE (*hoarsely*). It's a lie. A lie, I tell you. I am John Enlow's daughter. You're telling me a lie, a low, blackmailing lie.

INJUN. I'm telling you the truth. I kin prove every word I've said.

HORTENSE (*close to him, facing him*). Now, you listen to me. Do you think you can frighten me with such a trumped-up story as this? Do you think I'm a simple, innocent girl afraid of her own shadow? I'm a woman, a woman of the world. I defy you. Suppose what you say *is* true, who would believe you? The world would call you a black-mailer and laugh at you, even as I laugh at you. You are beneath contempt. You say the babies were changed years ago. Who would take your word for it? Where are your proofs?

INJUN (*sneers*). My proofs? I reckon my proofs ain't far off.

HORTENSE. Where are they? Produce them. Your story is infamous. I tell you it is a scheme to extort money from me. It's blackmail. But I won't be blackmailed. I defy you! (*Glares at him.*)

INJUN. You lie. You don't defy me. For down in your heart you know I speak the truth. You fear me. (*Grasps her wrist.*) Do you hear, you fear me. If I but say the word you'll lose everything. Your money, your social posi-

tion, everything, and come here to live as the granddaughter of old Mammy Buzzer.

HORTENSE (*struggling to be free*). Who are you? How have you learned this wretched story?

INJUN. Who am I? How have I larned the story, you ask? I larned it because I'm the man who helped steal John Enlow's baby. I'm the husband of Liza Buzzer, the woman who gave up her own baby to John Enlow. I'm your father.

HORTENSE (*pauses, looks at him as if stunned, staggers as if faint, crosses to R. and sinks in chair sobbing*). It isn't true; it isn't true.

INJUN (*bends over her and hisses in her ear*). It is true, as true as gospel. There, there; don't take on. I ain't goin' to hurt y' none. I'm goin' to help you. What good 'ud it do me to tell John Enlow the truth? He wouldn't pay me no more than you kin pay me. I'm proud of y', my gal, proud of y'.

HORTENSE (*sobbing*). Leave me alone, leave me alone. Alone in my shame and degradation. Go away—don't touch me. (*Hysterically.*) Don't come near me, or I shall kill myself.

INJUN. Now don't git excited, gal; don't git excited. You and me is going to work together in this game. I ain't got no love fer John Enlow ner yet for that Lighthouse brat, his darter. Listen to me. I kin get the proofs and give 'em to you and you kin destroy them. Then there ain't no one on earth will ever know the truth.

HORTENSE (*joyfully grasps his arm*). And you will? You'll do this for me? You won't claim me and take away from me everything that's worth living for?

INJUN. I'll be your pard. We'll work together. But I've got to have money.

HORTENSE. You shall have money. You shall have everything I possess. Only get me the proofs. Give them to me in my hands. Let me burn them and scatter the ashes to the winds.

INJUN. You shall have them. Pay me one thousand dollars and the proof will be in your hands tonight.

HORTENSE. I'll do it.

INJUN. I'll get the papers and the locket from old Mother Buzzer.

HORTENSE. Does she know? Tell me. Does that horrible old woman know this story?

INJUN. She knows. But she won't blab. If she does I'll—(*makes gesture as if strangling some one*).

HORTENSE. We are leaving this place tomorrow. Whatever is done must be done tonight.

INJUN. It shall be done tonight. Meet me at the old mill at midnight.

HORTENSE. But—

INJUN. Are you afraid?

HORTENSE. I'll see you in the morning. Come to the house and pose as a beggar. Ask for me. I'll settle everything with you then. But I must have the proofs.

MR. E. (*outside rear R.*). Hortense! Hortense!

HORTENSE. Some one is coming. Quick, go! You must not be seen here.

INJUN (*crosses to L.*). I'll go.

HORTENSE. Remember I must have the proofs tomorrow.

INJUN. I'll do the work tonight.

MR. E. (*outside*). Hortense, where are you?

HORTENSE (*goes up C. and calls off R.*). Here I am, father.

INJUN (*at L.*). Tonight! (*Exits L.*)

HORTENSE (*comes down R., sinks in chair and buries face in hands, sobs*). His daughter! His! Oh, the disgrace, the degradation!

Enter MR. ENLOW from rear R.

MR. E. Hortense!

HORTENSE (*looks up*). Yes, father.

MR. E. I was afraid something had happened to you. (*Comes to her.*) You have been crying. What is it?

HORTENSE (*nervously*). Nothing. Only a headache. That's all, a headache.

MR. E. You'd better go to your room. When Mrs. Buzzer returns I'll have her bring you up a cup of tea.

HORTENSE (*rises*). Yes, I'll go. (*Comes to him.*) Father, have you ever seen this Mrs. Buzzer before?

MR. E. Yes, I think I have. Many years ago. This is the very place where you were stolen when a baby.

HORTENSE. And it was Mrs. Buzzer who brought me back to you?

MR. E. No, it was a younger woman. Yes, come to think of it, I believe it was a daughter of Mrs. Buzzer who brought you back. I only saw her for a few moments. My wife was ill and my lawyer paid the young woman the reward.

HORTENSE. What happened to her then?

MR. E. She went away. I believe she died a few years later.

HORTENSE. And this is the house where I was kept a prisoner when I was a baby?

MR. E. Yes, this is the place. I hadn't thought of it before, but now I am sure of it.

HORTENSE. Then it's true! (*Wrings hands.*) Oh, the disgrace, the disgrace! (*Exits R. in house.*)

MR. E. She's overwrought. The sail this afternoon was too much for her.

ICHABOD (*out at R. rear*). Gid ap, there, January. H'ist yourself. Gee, there, January, gee! Now back up! Whoa!

Enter SIR ARTHUR, NAN and NED from rear R.

NAN (*coming down L.*). That was the most splendiferous time I ever had in my whole life.

NED (*down C.*). Nan, you ought to go away to school. A year or two at a good school would make you the equal of any lady in the land.

SIR ARTHUR (*down L. to MR. E.*). And where is Miss Hortense, Mr. Enlow?

MR. E. She had a headache and has gone to her room.

SIR ARTHUR. Aw, really! Now that's too bad, doncher-know! (*Talks to him.*)

ICHABOD (*outside*). Back up thar, January! Back, gol durn ye, back!

Wagon is backed in, containing MOLL, SARAH and
ICHABOD.

MOLL (*coming down C.*). Well, city folks can stay up late if they want to, but I'm going to bed. Buzzer!

ICHABOD (*coming to her*). Yes, my gentle antelope, what is it?

MOLL. You see that the house is locked up, and if he gives you that two dollars remember I want it in the morning.

ICHABOD. But I gotta git some medicine—

MOLL. I know what kinder medicine you want'er git, and it don't go. (*Goes to door R.*) Remember, every cent of that two dollars in the morning. (*Exits R.*)

ICHABOD. That's jist the way. Gotta give her every cent to keep her rollin' in silks and satins while her poor husband ain't even got a good pair of suspenders. Got to use a nail. By golly, I wisht I'd never set eyes on that woman.

SARAH (*coming down to R.*). Arthur, it's getting late and this night air is bad for your system. You'd better retire like a good boy.

SIR ARTHUR (*yawns*). I believe I had. I'm getting sleepy, too. Well, I think I'll put on me little nightcap and go to the drowsy. Ta-ta! (*Exits R.*)

SARAH. The poor dear. He isn't used to roughing it. He's such a gentle flower. Good-night, all. (*Exits R.*)

Blue lights from L.

ICHABOD (*goes to Mr. E.*). Jedge, if you got that two dollars handy—

MR. E. Certainly, Mr. Buzzer. (*Gives it to him.*) That trip and supper were worth the money.

ICHABOD. I reckon I'll go down to the tavern. I got to see a friend of mine.

NAN (*comes to him*). Now, grandad, don't go down there tonight. Save your money.

ICHABOD. And let the gentle antelope take it all away from me in the morning? Not much.

NAN. But you know what she'll do if you go and get soused.

ICHABOD. Well, I reckon she won't do nothin' till tomor-rer anyhow. And I'm a goin' to have a good time tonight and not worry about the greeting the gentle antelope'll give me in the morning. Nan, you stay up and let me in. She might take it into her gentle head to lock me out'n house and home and I'm gittin' too old to sleep with January. (*Goes to L.*) Evening, gentlemen. Nan, wait up fer your old grandad. (*Sings.*) "Fer I won't be home till morning, I won't be home till morning, I won't be home till morning, till daylight does appear." (*Exits L.*)

MR. E. I think I'll sit here awhile in the moonlight. (*Sits.*) There's no place like old Carolina down by the sea.

NED. Aren't you going in, Mr. Enlow?

MR. E. Not just yet.

NED. But the night air might be bad for you.

NAN. Yes, indeed, the night air is awful bad fer some folks.

MR. E. Do you want me to go?

NED. Why, no; certainly not.

NAN. Of course not. Whatever put sich a idea in your head?

MR. E. I'd like to have a few words with you, little one.

NAN. With me?

MR. E. Yes, with you.

NED. That let's me out. Well, I guess I'll turn in. See you in the morning, Nan. Good-night, Mr. Enlow. (*Exits in house R.*)

NAN. Oh, Daddy Buzzer's gone and left old January hitched right out thar. Wait a minute, Mr. Enlow, I gotta put January to bed. (*Goes out at rear R. and speaks off stage.*) Whoa, there, January! Gid ap! (*Wagon is drawn off at R.*)

MR. E. A queer little girl, but she has a heart of gold. Too bad that she has to waste her young life slaving for old Mother Buzzer. I feel strangely drawn to her. I'd like to send her away to school. I'd like to give her a chance to make something out of her life. By George, I'll do it. Five or six hundred a year means nothing to me and it would mean all the world to that poor little waif.

Enter NAN from rear R.

NAN. I done put January to bed and he's snoring like a steam engine.

MR. E. Nan, come here. I want to talk to you.

NAN (*slides toward him*). Go ahead. What you want to talk about?

MR. E. This wild life here, child. Do you like it?

NAN (*with closed lips, meaning "yes"*). Um-umph. I ain't never known no other. The only nurse I ever had was the sea and I go to bed every night listening to the song of the waves on the coast.

MR. E. It is a beautiful spot. I love to watch the waves in the moonlight.

NAN. Well, go as fur as you like. We don't charge nothin' extry fer the view.

MR. E. You're a strange child.

NAN. I ain't no child. I'm a young lady.

MR. E. You are a child of nature, Nan. But you're not like the country girls I see hereabouts.

NAN. Well, I should say not. That's 'cause I was eddicated in the city.

MR. E. Educated in the city?

NAN. Yep. Spent three weeks in a orphunt asylum.

MR. E. Why, I supposed you were the granddaughter of Cap'n Buzzer?

NAN. I dunno whether I am er not. Mammy Buzzer won't tell me nothin' 'bout myself and Daddy Buzzer is a skeerd to. I lived yere when I was a baby and when I was a little gal; then when I got bigger they sent me off to the orphunt asylum to get eddicated.

MR. What is your name?

NAN. Nan.

MR. E. I know. But Nan what?

NAN. Jes' Nan. Nan nothin'. Lighthouse Nan.

MR. But what were the names of your mother and father?

NAN. Jes' nothin' too. My mother died when I was a little baby. I don't reckon I ever had a father.

MR. E. But you owe it to yourself to make the most of your limited opportunities. You work hard, it is true, but you should try and get an education. Many a poor country girl has made a good record with her intelligence and integrity.

NAN. Gee, you use such big words, I reckon your jaw hurts. If you're goin' to preach a sermon, go ahead. I'll set up yere in the gallery. (*Jumps up on bench and sits on the back.*) Now, go ahead, brother.

MR. E. You say you were educated in an orphan asylum?

NAN. Yep. I staid there three weeks. They like to starved the life out'n me and they beat me besides. So one dark night I shinnied out'n the winder and walked twenty-three miles back to the old lighthouse, and I ain't been eddicated since.

MR. E. Now, see here, Nan, I want you to make me a promise.

NAN. No asylum?

MR. E. No.

NAN. No poor-house?

MR. E. No.

NAN. No hired girl?

MR. E. No.

NAN. Then shoot ahead and I'll make it.

MR. E. If I send you away to school will you promise to be a good girl and study hard and make me proud of you?

NAN. Will I? *Will I?* Honest, Mr. Enlow, if you'd do that I'd work fer you till my dying day. I'd serve you like a slave on my bended knees. There ain't nothin' honest I wouldn't do fer you, if you'd only give me a chance. (*Cries.*) I ain't never had no chance. Mammy Buzzer beats me and makes me work like a nigger slave. I never go nowhars and I never sees nobody. I never git a chance. The other girls go to school and have good shoes and clothes and hats and I hain't got nothin'. I ain't got nothin'. I'm only a roustabout—only Lighthouse Nan. (*Cries.*)

MR. E. (*goes to her*). There, there, Nan. There's no

cloud too dark to have a silver lining. Better times are coming for you. I'll help you. I'll be your friend.

NAN. You will? Be my friend? You, with all your money and high-toned style—you'll be my friend?

MR. E. I will. I'll send you off for a couple of years to a boarding school. I'll pay all your expenses—

NAN. I don't want you to do that. I don't want your money, Mr. Enlow. I'm poor and I don't amount to shucks, but I never begged a cent from no one, and I never stole a cent from no one, and I never got a cent from no one that I didn't pay it back in good hard work.

MR. E. I honor your sentiments, Nan. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll lend you the money to get an education. And then, when you are a rich, cultured lady you can pay it back to me. Is it a bargain? (*Extends hand.*)

NAN. Yes, Mr. Enlow, it's a bargain. (*Shakes his hand.*)

MR. E. It's an old man's whim, perhaps, but I can afford whims.

NAN. What *is* a whim, Mr. Enlow?

MR. E. It's a fancy generally, but in this case it's a decision.

NAN. Gee, you talk jest like a dictionary. I never heerd no sich words before.

MR. E. I'm going to give you a chance and I will succeed if my money and your good conduct will avail. I'm going to be your friend. I'm going to give you a chance.

NAN (*shaking his hand*). Thank you, Mr. Enlow, thank you.

MR. E. Tomorrow you'll leave with us for the city. My daughter will attend to your wardrobe and in a week you will be off to boarding school.

NAN (*jumping up and down in delight*). Oh, goody, goody, goody! I'm going to be a lady, I'm going to be a lady. (*Stops suddenly.*) Oh, gosh! It ain't no go, mister. It can't be did.

MR. E. Why, what's the matter?

NAN. Mammy Buzzer, she's the matter. She won't never let me go away with you-all to the city.

MR. E. I think she will. Mrs. Buzzer can be persuaded with a little money.

NAN. Air ye goin' to pay her?

MR. E. Yes, I think I'll give her a little present and then she will offer no objections to our plan.

NAN. Say, you certainly know how to git around the women, don't you?

MR. E. Then it's all settled. You will leave with us tomorrow.

NAN. Yes, and I want you to know how much I thank you, Mr. Enlow. Gee, I can't tell you how much.

MR. E. You'll show your appreciation by studying hard and by being a good, obedient girl. (*Goes to house at R.*) But I must be getting in. You'd better go to bed, Nan, and get a good night's rest. You will have to be up bright and early in the morning.

NAN. I can't go to bed now, Mr. Enlow. I gotta wait up and let grandad in. If I ain't here when he comes home he'll have to spend the night out there with January. He won't be able to find the keyhole.

MR. E. You're not afraid, are you?

NAN (*laughs*). Who? Me? Say, I ain't afraid of anything that walks.

MR. E. Good-night, Nan.

NAN. Good-night, Mr. Enlow, and I shore am much obliged to you fer all your kindness to a little no-'count roustabout like me.

MR. E. Good-night. (*Exits R. in house.*)

NAN (*skipping around*). Oh, I'm goin' off to boarding school and larn how to be a fine lady and eat with a fork. Goin' to git me a satin dress with a train a mile long and goin' to larn how to talk French and Spanish and be a reg'lar swell. (*Sees her shadow.*) Oh, howdy, Miss Shadow, howdy. What do you think of me, hey? I'm goin' to be a fine lady and go to the city tomorrow. Pretty fine, ain't it? (*Nods head.*) You nodded your head. Come on, Miss Shadow, and dance with me. (*Music as NAN dances to her shadow. Her shoe comes untied.*) Gee, wait a minute till I tie my shooie-shoe. Now come on, Miss

Shadow, and I'll show you how to dance. (*Stops suddenly.*) I heerd something. (*Goes to gate and looks off L.*) Thar's someone comin' down the road. They're a sneakin' along in the shadows of the trees. It ain't grandad, 'cause he walks too straight. Gee, I'm skeerd. I reckon I'd better get under the bed in my room. (*Starts to house.*)

INJUN *appears at L.*

INJUN. Hold on thar!

NAN. What you want?

INJUN (*comes to C.*). Come yere.

NAN. It's the Injun.

INJUN. Come yere, er it'll be the worse fer you.

NAN (*comes to him at C.*). I ain't skeerd of you, Injun Jim. Now, what you want here?

INJUN (*grasps her wrist*). You lay low and don't say a word. I'll tell y' what I want.

NAN. I thought you was my grandad.

INJUN. I reckon you know who I am.

NAN. I don't know no good of you. I'm goin' to bed.

INJUN (*pulls her back roughly*). You're a goin' to stay right yere. Lay low and don't say a word. Look yere, gal, you ain't never had no money, have you?

NAN. Yep. I had eighteen cents once. But Mother Buzzer took it away from me.

INJUN. How'd you like to have fifty dollars?

NAN. I'd like it. Couldn't you make it five hundred?

INJUN. If you lay low and don't say a word, I'll give you fifty dollars tomorrer morning. You kin buy a red silk dress and a hat, a yaller hat and some new shoes. Why, you kin be a reg'lar lady with fifty dollars.

NAN. Are you goin' to give it to me?

INJUN. I shore am.

NAN. Hand it over. I'll take it tonight. I might miss you in the morning.

INJUN. You won't miss me. Now I'm goin' in that house.

NAN. You're goin' to rob Mr. Enlow. You shan't do it. He's been good to me. You shan't do it.

INJUN (*forces her into the seat under the bell*). Set

down. Lay low and don't say a word. (*Back of her. Draws knife.*) You see this knife?

NAN. I ain't blind.

INJUN. Well, you'll feel it across your throat if you ain't careful. I'm a dangerous man. Now make your choice, my gal. Which is it to be, this yere knife er the fifty dollars. (*Chokes her.*)

NAN. Don't choke me. I'll take the fifty dollars.

INJUN. That shows you got some sense. (*Crosses to door R.*) Lemme git the lay of the land. (*NAN hides under bench.*) Where's old Mother Buzzer's room. (*Turns.*) Why, the little wild-cat, where is she? (*Sees her.*) Come out. (*Drags her out by hair.*) I see I can't trust you. (*Forces her to bench.*) I'll jest make sure of you, my gal. (*Ties her to bench and ties her hands behind her, she uttering ejaculations.*) I guess I'll stop up your mouth so's you can't scream. (*Produces bandana and gags her, tying it behind post. The first time it slips under her chin, she grins, he puts it over her mouth, then goes in front of her and flashes knife.*) Look a yere, if I find you've moved a inch when I come back, I'll slit your wizen. See? (*She nods. He starts to house.*) Lay low and don't say a word. (*Exit in house R.*)

NAN (*tries to get loose, sees bell-rope with noose hanging down, puts head in loop and rings the bell.*)

Enter NED from R. and cuts her loose. They take C. Enter INJUN from house, running backward. NED meets him at L. C. and they struggle. Enter MOLL, SARAH, SIR ARTHUR and MR. ENLOW from house with lights. Lights on full. SIR ARTHUR has gun. NAN grabs it, runs L. C. and points it at INJUN.

NAN. Hands up, Injun Jim. (*He complies.*) Git him, Mr. Enlow. (*Men seize INJUN.*) Now, Injun Jim, jest lay low and don't say a word!

QUICK CURTAIN.

Second Picture: SIR ARTHUR and MR. ENLOW drag INJUN off at L. NED embraces NAN. SARAH faints in chair at R. All to quick music.

ACT III.

SCENE: *Library in JOHN ENLOW'S city house. Entrances R., L. and C. with dark draperies. Fireplace down L. with logs and concealed red electric light. Fender, tongs, etc. Large easy chair in front of the fireplace, facing the fire. Elaborate table L. C. with dark chairs around it. Leather couch down R. Other library furniture. Palms in the corners. The stage is decorated for Christmas with festoons of green and red paper bells, holly, etc. Lighted chandelier. Lighted candles on mantel and piano.*

NED *discovered at rise seated on couch, smoking.* MR. E. *seated R. C., smoking. Both in evening dress.*

NED. Mr. Enlow, that was a wonderful Christmas dinner. My only regret is that little Nan won't be here until tomorrow.

MR. E. I suppose she has grown so in two years that I'll hardly know her.

NED. The boarding-school has done wonders for her. She's a perfect lady, but she's still the same true-hearted little Nan we used to know at the lighthouse.

MR. E. I can hardly wait to see the results of my experiment. She's to be here at ten tomorrow morning.

NED. When I saw her last, at the Hallowe'en dance at the school, she wanted me to thank you for your kindness to her. She realizes that she owes everything to you and her heart is full of gratitude.

MR. E. I wish Hortense were more like her.

NED. Mr. Enlow, I've been wanting to speak to you about Hortense.

MR. E. Yes, Ned, what about her?

NED. I cannot understand the strange interest she takes in that prisoner Injun Jim. She visited him again at the penitentiary last month and has done everything in her power to have him pardoned by the governor.

MR. E. I don't understand it, Ned. She is usually so cold and unfeeling with persons of that class.

NED. I wonder if it is possible that this man has some hold on Hortense?

MR. E. Certainly not. What put such an idea in your head?

NED. I hardly know, but her sudden interest in him, her efforts in his behalf, the luxuries she has furnished him—all of these things make me think that there is some unknown connection between them.

MR. E. One would naturally suppose that she would hate him, for he is the man who abducted her eighteen years ago.

NED. And it was his wife who restored her to you, wasn't it?

MR. E. Yes. Liza Buzzer.

NED. This Liza Buzzer had a child of her own who was just about Hortense's age. Do you suppose it could have been possible that she substituted her own child for yours and brought your child up as Lighthouse Nan?

MR. E. I never dreamed of such a thing. But we must investigate this thoroughly. If such a thing has been done I will leave no stone unturned to punish the guilty parties and to bring Nan into her rightful place.

NED. Two years ago when we were visiting at the lighthouse I found a locket that Injun Jim tried to steal from Mother Buzzer. In it was a miniature portrait of a lady.

MR. E. A tiny gold locket in the shape of a heart?

NED. Yes, sir. It was shaped like a heart.

MR. E. And the picture was painted on ivory?

NED. I believe so.

MR. E. Then it was the picture of my wife. My baby had that locket around her neck the night she was stolen.

NED. I have sent for Cap'n Buzzer and his wife to come here. I thought that maybe we could force the truth from them after all these years. Of course it may be a mere suspicion, but something seems to tell me that Lighthouse Nan is your daughter.

MR. E. In that case Hortense would be the daughter of Injun Jim. What a horrible fate for her. When will Cap'n Buzzer and his wife arrive?

NED. They'll be here tonight, Mr. Enlow. Will you see them?

MR. E. (*rises*). Yes, I'll see them and I'll have the truth at last, if it takes every dollar I'm worth.

Enter HORTENSE from L.

HORTENSE. Father!

MR. E. (*goes to her*). Yes?

HORTENSE. I have something to say to you.

NED. All right. I'll just take myself and the cigar into the conservatory. (*Exit R.*)

HORTENSE (*coming down C.*). Your Christmas gift was very beautiful, father. I want to thank you for it.

MR. E. I am glad you liked it, Hortense. (*Sits in front of fire.*)

HORTENSE. I have a favor I wish to ask of you.

MR. E. A favor?

HORTENSE (*stands back of him*). Yes. I understand that you have permitted that lighthouse beggar girl to visit us.

MR. E. Now, Hortense, we'd better not discuss that. You know I always lose my temper.

HORTENSE. And I lose mine. But this is Christmas Day and you are my father. I think I have a right to speak my mind.

MR. E. Very well. You generally do speak your mind anyway.

HORTENSE. This girl must be sent back to her own people.

MR. E. (*rises*). Now, my dear—

HORTENSE (*facing him L. C.*). Don't you see it's for her own good? You have furnished her with clothes and money, you have sent her to an expensive boarding-school, you have given her thoughts and ideas far above her station.

MR. E. I am deeply grateful to Nan for saving us from that burglar at the lighthouse two years ago. I have chosen this way to show my gratitude. Let us speak no more about it.

HORTENSE. I will speak about it. I hate her. She is tricky and sly and underhand in all her doings. She has fooled you, she has entwined herself about your heart until

you obey her slightest caprice. But there must be an end to it. You say she is coming here tomorrow. Very well. That is the time to send her back where she belongs, back to the Buzzers at the lighthouse. Either she leaves this house tomorrow, or I leave it. Now, take your choice.

MR. E. I am the master of my house. It is my right to say who shall be my guests. It is my right to say what I shall do with my money. Now listen to me. Little Nan is coming here as my guest and she is to be treated with kindness by you and by everyone in this house. And furthermore she is to remain as long as I please. I am the master here.

HORTENSE. And I am the mistress. I will not tolerate that whining beggar in my house.

MR. E. Then perhaps you'd better take a little vacation until she is ready to go back to school.

HORTENSE. A vacation? If ever I leave your house, father, I shall never return to it again.

MR. E. Don't be foolish, Hortense, you are making a mountain out of a mole hill.

HORTENSE. Sir Arthur and Sarah are here as our guests. They are of the nobility. Do you think they care to associate with a beggar from the streets?

MR. E. If they don't like Nan they have my permission to go back to England whenever they please.

HORTENSE. You don't like Sir Arthur, do you?

MR. E. I do not. I think he is a common adventurer and I believe he is an impostor.

HORTENSE. Be careful. You are speaking of my husband!

MR. E. Hortense!

HORTENSE. It is true. I was of age last month. I married Sir Arthur Choke at the rectory this morning.

MR. E. Married him?

HORTENSE. It was a grand match. It has been the ambition of my life to become one of the nobility.

MR. E. But why was I kept in ignorance of this? Why did you not ask my advice?

HORTENSE. I knew you objected to him, but I am a woman, father. I know the world better than you do. When I became of age I inherited my mother's fortune. I became my own mistress.

MR. E. Cold and unfeeling to the last. Very well, I will have my lawyers turn your property over to you. But as far as little Nan is concerned, my will is law. She is my guest and is to be treated as such.

HORTENSE. Very well. If that is the case Sir Arthur and myself will go to the hotel tomorrow as soon as she comes.

MR. E. But Hortense—

HORTENSE. You have made your decision. You have chosen this nameless waif in preference to your own flesh and blood. Tomorrow I shall leave your house. (*Crosses to door L.*) And if you take this girl into your home you will be shut out from all respectable society. (*Exits L.*)

MR. E. (*sitting in front of fire*). Hortense married! She has sold herself for a title. Ned's theory has strangely upset me. Suppose Liza Buzzer *did* change the babies years ago. Then Hortense is the lighthouse waif and little Nan is my own daughter.

Enter NAN from L. in full evening costume. She tiptoes down behind MR. E. and puts her hands over his eyes.

NAN. Guess who it is.

MR. E. Bless my soul! It's Nan. Little Nan. (*Rises, takes her hands.*)

NAN. Dear Mr. Enlow! My kindest friend and benefactor. (*Hugs him.*)

MR. E. Why, Nan, child, how you have grown. Why, you're quite a little lady.

NAN. How do you like my new dress? (*Whirls around.*)

MR. E. It is beautiful. But I thought you weren't coming until tomorrow.

NAN. I wanted to surprise you and I couldn't wait another minute.

MR. E. But no one met you at the station.

NAN. I got into a taxi and came here at once. You

were all at dinner. I sneaked up to my old room and dressed up and came sneaking down to say thank-you and merry Christmas to the best guardian in all the world.

MR. E. Well, well, well; this is a surprise. (*Sits facing fire.*)

NAN (*sits on arm of his chair*). And I'm to stay here a whole week.

MR. E. And how do you like your school, Nan?

NAN. It's lovely. I never dreamed there was as much happiness in store for me. I have worked hard every minute of the time just to show you that your money was well invested.

MR. E. And I am proud of my investment. You have brought a ray of sunshine into my gloomy old life, Nan—and that's worth all the money in the world. Hortense is proud and cold, but you seem like a real daughter to me.

NAN. And you have been the kindest of fathers. How are all the family?

MR. E. All quite well, thank you.

NAN. Mr. Blake is still with you, isn't he?

MR. E. Oh, yes, Ned's still here. He is in the conservatory.

NAN. And I suppose his health is good.

MR. E. It couldn't be better. And then there is Hortense. I have a surprise for you, Nan. I suppose you haven't heard about the wedding?

NAN. Wedding? Did he marry her? Why, I thought—that is, he proposed to me. Oh, I don't mean that! I mean—well, please don't say anything about it. I wish them every happiness.

MR. E. They are leaving for England soon and I will be left all alone. The whole family are going to sail. Everyone but me.

NAN. Family? Is there a family? A baby?

Enter NED from R.

NED. Nan, Nan! Welcome home!

NAN (*at C.*). Go away, I don't want to have anything to do with you.

NED. Why, Nan!

MR. E. (*rises*). How has he offended you, Nan?

NAN. Oh, he hasn't offended me. Of course it is nothing to me. Where's your wife?

NED. My wife?

NAN. And your baby?

NED. Who's baby? What baby? Mr. Enlow, what is she talking about? I haven't any baby.

MR. E. Nan, you shouldn't speak so to Ned. He is a confirmed young bachelor. Aren't you, Ned?

NED. Yes, sir. That is, for the present.

NAN. Isn't he married to Miss Hortense?

MR. E. Why, certainly not. Hortense is now Lady Choke. She married Sir Arthur. (NED *surprised*).

NAN. And the baby?

NED. What baby?

NAN. Your baby. No, I mean their baby. Miss Hortense's baby. No; say, hasn't anyone in the family got a baby?

NED. Why, Nan, you are excited. You're talking wildly.

NAN. I reckon I'm crazy.

MR. E. Ned, it's a disease for which you are the best doctor. I'll leave you two to settle the matter together. (*Exits L.*)

NED (*seated on couch*). Won't you sit down, Nan?

NAN (*distantly*). I beg your pardon, Mr. Blake!

NED. Rather cool this evening, isn't it? A rather cool Christmas.

NAN (*at C.*). Yes, I'm rather cool myself.

NED. Nan, do you remember the old days at the lighthouse when I told you that a few years at school would change you into the bright, brilliant lady I now see before me?

NAN. Yes, I remember.

NED. And do you remember that night at the school dance? (*Close to her.*)

NAN. Yes, I remember.

NED. I asked you to be my wife that night, Nan. Now

I ask you again. It is Christmas night. Nan, will you be my little Christmas present?

NAN. What do you think I am—a jumping jack?

NED. Very well. I see how it is. You've met some other fellow at school, haven't you? My presence here offends you. I will not intrude any longer. Good evening, Miss Nan. (*Crosses to L.*)

NAN. Good evening, Mr. Blake. (*Sits on couch.*)

NED (*at door*). I'm going. Good evening, Miss Nan.

NAN. Good evening, good evening!

NED. I'm going never to return. You'll never see me again. I won't trouble you any more. Good evening, Miss Nan.

NAN. Good evening, good evening, good evening!

NED (*comes to C.*). Miss Nan!

NAN. Are you here yet? Yes, Mr. Blake?

NED. If you have anything to say at parting, say it now, as we may never meet this side of the grave. We are parting forever.

NAN (*to audience*). He's liable to do it. (*To him.*) Mr. Blake, I think your conduct is very reprehensible and your manners are very unbecoming. Act like a gentleman. Unhand me, villain, take your arms from around my waist.

NED (*rushes to her*). Then you were only joking with me?

NAN. I don't know. Maybe I was. (*He tries to embrace her, she ducks under his arms and runs to C.*) Mr. Blake, if you have anything to say to me at parting, say it now for we may never meet again until I powder my nose. (*He tries to catch her. She runs out at L.*)

NED. Bless her heart. She's the only girl in all the world for me. (*Runs out at L.*)

Enter ICHABOD and MOLL from C. MOLL carries bag of papers.

ICHABOD (*looks around*). Wall, I never! This yere house is fixed up like a palace.

MOLL. And that 'ere man didn't want to let us in, hey? I reckon he thought we was a couple of tramps.

ICHABOD. Mollie, I don't reckon you orter hit him the way you did. City folks ain't used to gittin' hit in the bread basket.

MOLL. I knowed this was the place and I waren't goin' to let no snap-doodle whippersnapper send Moll Buzzer 'round to the back door. I'm a lady, I am, and we're jist as good as anyone.

ICHABOD. I wonder what Mr. Blake wants with we-uns.

MOLL. He must want to see us powerful bad to send us ten dollars fer expenses; but if it's anything about them babies, you keep a still tongue in yer head and let me do all the talking. I knows what I knows, and what I knows is worth a heap of money.

ICHABOD. I come on purpose to see my little Nan. Mr. Blake writ us as how she'd be yere to meet us.

MOLL. I wonder what she'll look like. I reckon as how she'll be too stuck up to know us any more. I never did want her to go 'way and git eddicated. What good is a eddication? What good did it ever do me?

ICHABOD. Mr. Enlow paid us a hundred dollars to let her go, and you took every cent of it. You're rollin' in riches and here I be, jis' as poor as I ever was. (*Sits on couch and jumps up quick.*) Holy mackerel, I thought I set on a cat. (*Feels couch.*) The dern thing's alive, shore's yer born. (*MOLL starts to sit on sofa.*) Go easy, old woman, go easy. You're liable to get blowed up.

MOLL. Don't be a plum fool, Ichabod Buzzer. (*Sits.*)

ICHABOD (*looking around*). Pretty slick place, ain't it, Mollie darling?

Enter HORTENSE from L.

HORTENSE. You here?

ICHABOD (*meeting her L. C.*). I reckon I air. Me and the gentle antelope, too.

MOLL (*rises*). I reckon you remember me, don't y'?

HORTENSE (*alarmed*). What brought you here?

ICHABOD. The steam keers, and I swar I never rid so fast in my borned days. They go lickety-split 'bout 'leven

million miles a minute, I reckon. Now I ain't used to goin' fast. Old January ain't much of a traveler.

HORTENSE. But why have you come here?

ICHABOD. We come to see our little Nan. She's yere, ain't she?

HORTENSE. What do you want with her?

MOLL. We wants to see her, that's what.

HORTENSE. I hope you'll take her back home with you. The city is no place for her.

ICHABOD. Maybe we will and thin agin maybe we won't. But we want to see her. I ain't seen Nan for nigh onto two years. I got a heart in my bosom, I have. She's our own flesh and blood.

HORTENSE. Is she? *Is she?*

MOLL. Yes, she is. And blood is thicker than water, every time.

ICHABOD. So's whisky, Mollie. Whisky is thicker'n water, too.

MOLL. I reckon you don't like little Nan, do y'?

HORTENSE. I hate her.

MOLL. You do, do you? What would yo do if she was to step into your shoes, my lady?

HORTENSE. What do you mean? You have something to tell me? Come to my room and I'll speak to you.

MOLL. I don't keer whether I tell it to you er to John Enlow. It's all the same to me.

HORTENSE. You'd better come and talk with me. If you have any secret that concerns me, I'll pay you well.

MOLL. That's the kind o' talk I likes to hear. I'll go and talk with you. Ichabod, you stay right here till I gits back, and don't you move from that spot.

HORTENSE. Walk this way. (*Exits L.*)

MOLL. Here's where I'm goin' to step into a fortune. (*Exits L.*)

ICHABOD (*pours drink at table*). And here's where I steps into a drink. (*Drinks, then spits it out.*) Perfumery, by thunder!

Enter SIR ARTHUR and SARAH from R.

SIR ARTHUR (*puts eyeglass in and stares at ICHABOD*).
By Jove!

ICHABOD (*imitates his action*). By Jove yourself and see how ye like it.

SIR ARTHUR. It's Cap'n Buzzer.

SARAH. Only fancy!

ICHABOD (*shakes hands roughly*). Much obliged, mister.
Merry Christmas.

SARAH. And what are you doing here in the city?

ICHABOD. Jes' drapped in to see my granddaughter.

SARAH. How weird!

SIR ARTHUR. Are the family expecting you?

ICHABOD. Wal, if they ain't they'll git the surprise of their lives. You a-boarding here, mister?

SIR ARTHUR. My sister and I are guests here, Cap'n Buzzer. I have married Mr. Enlow's daughter.

ICHABOD. Ye don't tell me. You don't look strong enough to marry a skeeter.

SARAH. Only fancy!

Enter MR. E. from R.

MR. E. How do you do, Cap'n? You remember me, don't you?

ICHABOD. I reckon I do. (*Shakes hands with him.*)

MR. E. Did you bring your wife along?

ICHABOD. Yes, siree. The gentle antelope wouldn't 'low me to stir outside the place, withot'n she were with me.

MR. E. Family well, I suppose?

ICHABOD. All purty tolerable. 'Cept January. Old January's got the heavens.

MR. E. And where is Mrs. Buzzer?

ICHABOD. She's upstairs talking with your daughter.

MR. E. Indeed! I wonder what Hortense can have to say to her?

ICHABOD. Tolerable nice Christmas we've done had, Mr. Enlow.

MR. E. Yes, indeed.

ICHABOD. Me and the old woman spent most of the day

in the keers. I ain't had nothin' to eat since breakfast. And I'm so thirsty I could drink water.

MR. E. Then come with me to my room. I'll have a little lunch sent up. Arthur, I wish to speak to you, also. (*Exits R. with ICHABOD.*)

SIR ARTHUR. Coming, dear boy, coming. (*Exits R.*)

Enter NED from L.

SARAH. Oh, Ned, I haven't seen you since dinner.

NED. I was looking for Nan.

SARAH. Has she returned? I thought she intended to come tomorrow.

NED. She changed her mind.

SARAH. I don't see how dear Hortense can tolerate that creature around the house.

NED. She is here as the guest of Mr. Enlow.

SARAH. But she's such a funny little thing. And her grammar! Heavens, how she murders the king's English.

NED. That was two years ago, Miss Sarah. There's been a great change in Nan since she went to boarding school.

SARAH. I understand Mr. Enlow sent her to school. A charity pupil, I suppose. How kind Mr. Enlow is.

NED. Yes, he is.

SARAH. But come here and sit down. We haven't had a real nice cozy chat for ages.

NED (*crosses to her and sits beside her*). That's so.

Enter NAN from L. She watches them from rear L.

SARAH. I suppose you have heard that Arthur and Hortense were married at the rectory this morning?

NED. Yes, quite a surprise, wasn't it?

SARAH. Yes, it was rather sudden. When are you going to announce your engagement, Mr. Blake?

NED. In a day or two.

SARAH. Really?

NED. Yes, if the young lady will accept me.

SARAH. Is it some one I know?

NED. Yes, indeed. She's here.

SARAH. What do you mean? Oh, Ned, is this a proposal?

NED. What?

SARAH. Are you asking me to marry you?

NAN (*comes down C.*). Oh, I beg your pardon. Don't let me interrupt.

SARAH (*rises*). Who are you?

NAN. I'm Lighthouse Nan home for a vacation.

SARAH. Can't you see that you are interrupting us? You remember the old saying, my dear, two is company and three is a crowd.

NED. Just a moment, Miss Sarah. I told you I was going to announce my engagement if the young lady would give me her consent. That young lady is Miss Nan Buzzer. Nan, what is your answer?

NAN (*runs to R.*). I'll tell you in the conservatory. (*Exits R.*)

SARAH. But, Ned—

NED. Excuse me, I've got a pressing engagement in the conservatory. (*Runs out R.*)

SARAH. 'Twas ever thus. Oh, man, man, how you do trifle with the feelings of a poor young girl. (*Crosses to L.*) I'm sure if he prefers the society of that lighthouse brat to mine, he's perfectly welcome. (*Exits L.*)

Enter ICHABOD, backing in from R. He has a napkin around his neck and a chicken leg in his hand.

ICHABOD (*speaking to Mr. E. off R.*). All right, Mr. Enlow. I'll find the gentle antelope and send her to you. (*Comes down C. and yells.*) Mollie, Mollie, where be ye?

Enter NAN from R.

NAN. Good evening.

ICHABOD (*not recognizing her*). Excuse me, mum, I ain't lookin' fer you. I'm a hollerin' fer my gentle antelope.

NAN. Don't you know me?

ICHABOD. I don't reckon I do.

NAN (*runs to him and takes his hands*). You do, you know you do!

ICHABOD (*draws away*). Yere, yere, the gentle antelope don't 'low me to flirt with no women.

NAN (*hugs him*).

ICHABOD. Break away, break away. My wife'll have a conniption fit if she sees you.

NAN. Grandad! I'm Nan. Your little Nan.

ICHABOD. Go on, you ain't nuther. .

NAN. And you don't know me!

ICHABOD. Well chew me up into little bits and put me in a sass-pan, if it ain't Nan. (*Hugs her.*) I'd never knowed ye in Kingdom Come.

NAN. Oh, grandaddy, I'm so glad to see you again.

ICHABOD. Nan, what you dressed up thataway fer?

NAN. Don't you like it? (*Whirls around.*) This is the latest style.

ICHABOD. You'd better take some of them tail feathers off and stick 'em around your neck. Your suspenders must be busted shore.

NAN (*sits on the arm of his chair*). Now tell me every single thing about the lighthouse. How's January?

ICHABOD. Porely, Nan, porely. January's got the heaves. Old Sukey's got a calf, the old red hen's got ten little chicks and the blacksmith's wife has got twins. Population is shore a growin' down thataway.

NAN. And how are you and Mother Buzzer?

ICHABOD. Jes' the same as ever. The gentle antelope don't give me a minute's peace day ner night.

NAN. What brought you here to the city, grandad?

ICHABOD. The natural feelings in my bosom. I come to see you.

NAN. Oh, what good times we used to have at the old lighthouse. Riding around on old January and playing in the sand. Ah, those were happy days. Do you remember how we used to go out in the row-boat and get red snapper? We always were so happy with never a care in the world.

ICHABOD. Excep' old Mother Buzzer. Say, Nan?

NAN. Yes?

ICHABOD. Ye ain't got any spare change 'round about ye, have ye?

NAN (*looks in chain purse*). I haven't anything but a dollar.

ICHABOD. It ain't much, but maybe it'll do. (*Rises.*)

NAN. Do for what? (*Rises.*)

ICHABOD. I want'er buy the old lady a Christmas present. Some dry goods.

NAN. I'm afraid you want to get the old man some wet goods.

ICHABOD. No, I don't. I'm goin' to buy some calico and have a silk dress made out'n it fer the gentle antelope.

NAN (*gives him coin*). There's my last dollar.

ICHABOD. Your last dollar. (*Bites it.*) You go in thar (*points L.*) and see if you kin find the gentle antelope. So you gin me yer last dollar, did ye, Nan?

NAN (*nods*).

ICHABOD (*tearfully*). Yer last dollar? Heaven bless you, Nan. Heaven bless my little gal and raise her wages.

NAN. I'll send Mother Buzzer to you. (*Exits L.*)

ICHABOD. (*Takes a drink from decanter, spits it out.*) I never see sech fancy drinks as they got in this house. Every dern swaller tastes like perfumery.

Enter MOLL and HORTENSE from L.

HORTENSE. Now you must leave this house at once and take that girl with you.

ICHABOD. We'll leave all right, my lady, but my little gal stays right yere.

MOLL. You hush up and listen to me. Miss Hortense has done give me five hundred dollars fer my proofs. Git yer hat fer we're goin' home and we're goin' to take Nan along with us.

ICHABOD. I tell ye Nan stays yere.

MOLL. She ain't of age, is she? I'm her gardeeen. She's gotta go with me.

ICHABOD. Mr. Enlow wants to have a talk with you afore you goes.

MOLL. What's he want?

ICHABOD. I dunno. He's in there. (*Points to R.*) Let's go in and see.

MOLL. Maybe we kin git some more money. (*Exits R. with ICHABOD.*)

HORTENSE (*takes papers and locket from bag*). Now to burn these papers and the secret is buried forever.

Enter NED from L. quickly.

NED. Not yet!

HORTENSE. What do you mean?

NED. I'll just take a look at those papers.

HORTENSE. You dare? (*Throws them in the fire.*)

NED (*takes them out*). I am not sure, but I think the mystery is cleared up at last. (*Goes to R.*) Mr. Enlow!

Enter MR. E. from R., followed by ICHABOD and MOLL.

MR. E. (*down R. C.*). What is it, Ned?

NED. Some papers. Look at them.

MOLL (*down R. with ICHABOD*). They're mine. Give 'em to me. Ye ain't got no right to 'em. Ichabod, get them papers.

ICHABOD. How am I goin' to git 'em?

HORTENSE (*down L.*). Father, don't read them. Don't do it, for my sake.

Enter SIR ARTHUR and SARAH from L.

SIR ARTHUR (*putting cloak around HORTENSE*). The car is at the door, Hortense. We shall be late for the opera.

MR. E. (*reading papers*). Just a moment, Sir Arthur. I have something to say to you.

HORTENSE (*comes to him*). Don't tell him. Father, for my sake!

MR. E. Ned, what we suspected has turned out to be the truth. At last we have solved the mystery.

HORTENSE (*pleading*). No, no, father. Have mercy, have mercy!

MR. E. This is Christmas Day, the celebration of the birth of the Father of all mercy. For His sake will I be merciful.

SIR ARTHUR (*at L. with SARAH*). But what does it all mean?

MR. E. (*C.*). It means that I have decided to adopt little Nan as my daughter and legal heir.

SIR ARTHUR. Hortense, we won't stand this. We will go to the courts, we will, by Jove!

HORTENSE. No, we will leave this house. Come, we'll go to a hotel and we'll sail on the first boat for England. I have done with this place forever.

SIR ARTHUR. Now that you are my wife you will have plenty of money even if your father has treated you shabbily. Come, my dear, the car is at the door. (*At C. D.*) Come, Sarah. (*She joins him.*)

HORTENSE (*to Mr. E.*). Farewell, farewell, forever! (*Exits C. D., followed by SIR ARTHUR and SARAH.*)

ICHABOD. But where is little Nan. Somebody order tell her the good news.

MOLL. You hush up. You ain't got a mite of sense. You never had none, you hain't got none now and you never will have none. (*Pushes him in seat.*)

Enter NAN from L.

NAN. Ned, I'm going to give you that Christmas present you asked me for. (*Chimes heard.*)

MR. E. Hark to the Christmas chimes. Nan, they are ringing for you. Your days of toil are over. They are ringing in a new life, a song of the everlasting angels—Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men! And this is the happiest night of my life.

(*NED embraces NAN at L. MR. E. stands C. ICHABOD tries to embrace MOLL at R.*)

CURTAIN.

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SYNOPSIS

Act I.—Rose Cottage on an afternoon in June. Yennie Yensen, the Swedish hired girl, wants to borrow some yumps and decides to bid on the hired man at the auction, as "he bane a purty gude looking feller." Miss Philipena arranges for the auction sale. Rose and Amos. "Out of the broken ruins of time fair blossoms grow, God's last amen is a white rose." The Deacon arrives from Sorghum Center, State o' West Virginny. "Ding, dong, bell, pussy's in the well." The farm is sold to Rose Raleigh for two thousand dollars. The defeat of Rawdon Crawley.

Act II.—Same scene, a morning in August. Wedding bells. "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on." Deuteronomy and Yennie bring wedding presents. Miss Philipena takes a nap with disastrous results. Yennie is scared. "Your face, it bane put on backwards." Back from the grave. "You are my wife. Take off that bridal wreath, that sparkling necklace." "Who is this man?" The Deacon arrests Rawdon Crawley.

Act III.—Same scene but a year later and in autumn. The husking bee. Songs and merriment by the villagers. "Rawdon Crawley has escaped!" "This is my punishment and my punishment is more than I can bear." The Deacon returns from New York. Miss Philipena and the fractious cow. The Deacon's nightmare. "Cork, cork, cork!" A wheelbarrow for two. The Virginia reel. The death of Rawdon Crawley. "We'll have a double wedding and for a honeymoon we'll all go down to Sorghum Center, State o' West Virginny."

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